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...IST CHURCH AND ITS WORK

BY
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AND
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TRAINING COURSES FOR LEADERSHIP
EDITED BY
HENRY H. MEYER AND C. B. CHAPPELL

Methodist
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Edited by HENRY H. MEYER and E. B. CHAPPELL

A Methodist Church and Its Work

BY

WORTH M. TIPPY and PAUL B. KERN

Approved by the Committee on Curriculum of the Board of Sunday Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Committee on Curriculum of the General Sunday School Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South

THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN
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FOREWORD

A Methodist Church and Its Work is one of the textbooks in the Training for Leadership Series. Those that have preceded it in the series are Life in the Making, Learning and Teaching, The Program of the Christian Religion, and the Training of the Devotional Life. With the specialization textbooks that will follow, the series as a whole will offer to the young people of Methodism a training course which for breadth and comprehensiveness will far surpass any that has hitherto been available for their use.

In this series the present volume occupies an important place. It has been provided because of the conviction that the young people who in the future are to be called upon to become teachers in the school of the church require to be given as a fundamental element in their training intelligent conceptions and high ideals of what a Methodist church ought to be, not merely in organization and methods of work, but even more in spirit and purpose. The Sunday school is the church school. Those who are to teach in the church school, who are to have a large place in forming the spiritual ideals and in determining the character of the future members of the church —that is, who are to make the church of to-morrow —require a vision of what the church ought to be.

The task prescribed for the authors, to provide within the limits of twelve brief chapters, a textbook that would accomplish this purpose, was not an

easy one. That they have perfectly succeeded they themselves would be the last to claim. That they have produced an exceptionally useful book, one that is well fitted both to inform and inspire young people, the editors believe that those who read it sympathetically will agree.

With the prayer that the book may be used with satisfaction by many groups of earnest young people seeking to fit themselves to build the church of the future, we send it forth upon its mission.

THE EDITORS.

Methodist Historical Society Southern California - Arizona Conference

CHAPTER I

OUR HERITAGE

The beginning of the Methodist movement.—A group of students awake to spiritual and social needs. Their life in Oxford.—The inheritances of Methodism from its past: (1) Learning joined to spiritual fervor. Study of Greek New Testament. (2) Preaching to masses outside the church. (3) A gospel of personal salvation. (4) Religious instruction of children. (5) Social spirit and vision. The wide range of services inaugurated by Wesley. Interest in public questions. (6) Organization and discipline. The genius of Wesley. Getting a church organized. Our lack of discipline. (7) Missionary Spirit. —America the field of early missions. Francis Asbury, the pioneer. Foreign Missions for American Methodism. Our heritage and our response.

METHODISM began in a way that must appeal to all young people—as an adventure for God and humanity by a company of young men at the greatest and oldest of England's universities.

Wesley writes: "In November, 1729, four young gentlemen of Oxford—Mr. John Wesley, fellow of Lincoln College; Mr. Charles Wesley, student of Christ Church; Mr. Morgan, Commoner of Christ Church; and Mr. Kirkham of Merton College—began to spend some evenings in a week together in reading, chiefly, the Greek Testament."

Three of these students, the two Wesleys and Kirkham, were sons of ministers. Morgan was the son of an Irish gentleman resident in Dublin. Wesley had

graduated from Christ Church College and had been honored with a fellowship at Lincoln College, which brought him an abundant income. The others were undergraduates. Their numbers were increased by students who joined the circle until they became a company that attracted the attention of the university.

A Spiritual Awakening. Their study of the Greek Testament had the most interesting and important consequences. They had started out to follow Christ and to do the things, in their own time and place, which they found him doing. When they first came together they had determined to abandon the follies of university life and to be faithful and regular in their religious duties. They spent time every morning and evening in private prayer, went to the holy communion at Christ Church once every week, persuaded all they could to attend prayers, sermons, and the sacrament.

But in the New Testament they were impressed by something additional. What it was is best shown by what they did. They went to the Bishop of Oxford and requested permission to visit the inmates of the parish workhouse and the prisoners in the Castle. They began to economize and to use all the money they received above expenses, and all they could get from people who became interested in their work, to provide for the necessities of prisoners, to free those who were imprisoned for small debts, to provide food, clothing, and shelter for poor people whom they discovered, and to provide for the religious education of their children. They preached in the Castle and workhouse and prayed with pris-

oners who were condemned to die. It is evident that they had read the parable of the good Samaritan and the twenty-fifth chapter of Saint Matthew.

In the midst of all this work and the discussion that it precipitated among the students they were true collegians, proud of the academic traditions of their colleges and of Oxford. Their correspondence with each other during vacation periods reveals how human they were in their enthusiasms, their wholesome love affairs, and their devoted friendships.

Here we have the first inheritance of Methodism —above all an inheritance for her young people—a religious awakening beginning in the oldest, the noblest, the most beautiful of English universities, with the charm of the best English life about it; a movement originated by young men of character and breeding, inspired by the most generous impulses, and manifesting courage of the highest order; a religious accomplishment of the first order, directly inspired by the study of the Greek New Testament.

Little did they know what would come of their club and their earnest efforts. They simply did their best and left the results with God. Some of them died early; others lost their first enthusiasm after leaving college, as many another young person has done. John Wesley spent a brief period in America, at Savannah, Georgia, where he has left an indelible memory. But from the members of this club came the leaders of the Great Awakening, and the character of that awakening and the genius of world-wide Methodism which arose from it were determined by them at Oxford.

It is not within the province of this chapter to

relate the thrilling story of their labors when they left the university and began to go up and down through England, Scotland, and Ireland, preaching and working with amazing zeal and power. Every young Methodist should read the story as he reads other fascinating narratives of high adventure for the good of the world.

But certain things stand out in what was said and done by them and in what was said and done by those who came after them in England and America, which are the true glory of historic Methodism and which remain to inspire the church to great endeavor.

The first is that they went boldly to the masses of the people and to those, high and low, who would not come to the churches. They did this everywhere over Great Britain and Ireland so rapidly, so powerfully, so determinedly, that they became in the best sense the sustained sensation of their generation.

The same spirit that had made them brave the criticism and ridicule of their fellow students at Oxford led them soon to face the scorn and ostracism of religious people and, in the early days of the great revival, the violence of mobs. They allowed nothing to hinder them. They stood on the platforms of the market crosses in villages. They hastened to executions, cockpits, and fairs, and preached to assembled thousands. They gathered the people together in open spaces outside the towns. They preached in the cottages of the poor, in barns, in great houses. They sought out miners, farm laborers, and fisher folk, and found their way everywhere into the crowded parts of the cities. They numbered also

among their supporters the wealthy, the educated, and the titled. It was a magnificent manifestation of Christian courage, strikingly like the work of the early Christians. The church can never get far unless it is willing in each generation to pay just such a price for victory.

In the second place Wesley and his associates went to the people with a most powerful and passionate preaching of the gospel of personal salvation. They denounced unsparingly the sins of their countrymen and called them to repentance and a godly life. They spoke with peculiar authority because of their own knowledge of the spiritual life and because of their own consecration and determination. They had found Christ themselves, and through Christ they would not stop until they had brought the people of England face to face with him. And with those who accepted Christ they would not stop until they too had felt their hearts "strangely warmed," nor until their hearts had been purified and filled with gladness by the presence of the Spirit of God. Under Wesley this evangelism was a constant effort, not a brief period of special meetings once every year. It was kept up week by week by his preachers and class leaders.

Religious Instruction of Children. While the early Methodist movement impresses one most by its revival effort and its great meetings, Wesley was equally careful about the religious instruction and Christian nurture of the children. He was no mere revivalist, but a transcendent evangel like Saint Paul, calling to men day and night to turn to God, visiting from house to house, conversing with multitudes

personally, speaking to the children in the households he visited, and gathering them together in his churches for instruction and care. This was their greatest work, and it is the finest tradition of Methodism. Above every other influence it accounts for the amazing growth of the church throughout the earth and for the fact that to-day twenty million people count themselves followers of Christ under the leadership of John Wesley. And while methods change with each new age, yet in ways just as effective and by an evangelism just as spiritual and just as uncompromising the work of redemption must be accomplished to-day and to-morrow.

Social Spirit and Vision. But as one thinks about the work of the Wesleys one is impressed also by the social spirit and vision that accompanied this evangelism. The group at Oxford which Wesley gathered about him learned this, as has been said, by their studies in the Greek New Testament. They saw Christ moving among the poor, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, defending the oppressed, befriending the outcast, patiently teaching the people, and sharing his life with them.

They proceeded to do the same to the best of their wisdom and strength, going first, as has been said, to the poor in and around Oxford, to the unfortunates in the Castle and the parish workhouse, and later everywhere over Great Britain and Ireland. It is not generally known that Wesley undertook medical work—physic, as it was called in his day—among the poor while at Oxford. This later came to be an important feature of his service to his generation.

Wesley built schools, orphanages, old folks' homes, and dispensaries for the care of the sick. In periods of unemployment he even went the length of establishing factories in which to give the people work. He set up a remarkably modern system of poor relief based on investigation, case work, visitation, medical care, care of children, and employment. It is related in his "Journal" that as an old man he came near to death by a cold contracted when tramping through the snow in London seeking funds for the relief of the needy during a period of unemployment. He also devised a significant method of sending his leaders two by two into stricken homes, with instructions to carry relief and to encourage and pray with those they helped.

Wesley and his associates were also keenly alive to public social questions. They joined in the agitation against slavery and were among the originators of the temperance movement. Wesley spoke out on grave public questions, like the war with the American colonies, he being a contemporary of George Washington. One of his pamphlets, which is still extant, is on the cause of the high cost of living in England at that time—a strangely modern treatise, in which he proposes to stop the brewing of beer and the distilling of spirits so as to economize the nation's store of grain.

In brief, it is well known that Wesley undertook and initiated almost every form of modern social work. His preeminence lay in the fact that he saw social service as a part of religion and made it such in his labors. He was easily the greatest social worker of his time, not even excepting Wilberforce.

What a heritage is that to the Methodism of today! It must be startling to one who believes that ministers and churches should save souls only, and that social service is not a part of the gospel, to know that the founder of Methodism gave social service a place secondary only to evangelism, and that he learned this at Oxford when he studied the methods of Christ in the New Testament.

Organization and Discipline. It has been said that John Wesley possessed a genius for administration equal to that of the great religious statesmen of the Church of Rome. Those who opposed him in his own day called him Pope John. Certain it is that he created a religious force which came to be like the army of Cromwell in its spirit and power.

He gathered together a company of people for the most part uneducated, instructed them, got them to reading, put them in training under leaders, and set them to work for Christ. He was obliged to use many insufficiently trained men for the ministry of his chapels, but he set about their better education with the greatest determination. He founded a profitable Book Concern, raised large amounts of money, undertook the erection of hundreds of chapels, orphanages, parsonages, schoolhouses, and administrative buildings, and established such a system that the work proceeded with economy and without scandal.

This is another of our heritages. The world cannot be saved by noble sentiments nor by men who have neither learned to discipline themselves nor to work together. When Francis Asbury came to America fresh from his experience with English

Methodism, he noted in his "Journal" the absence of discipline in the religious life of the New World and proceeded to establish and enforce it in his churches with all his power.

Modern Methodism has inherited the ecclesiastical machinery of generations of effort, improved upon and enlarged until it has become an imposing, world-wide organization. Our present weakness is our lack of discipline. Under modern conditions such control as Wesley exercised is impossible in any church. The spirit of the age is for freedom, so that the very great authority which the church exercises and will always exercise must be reenforced by a strong voluntary discipline of our members over themselves.

We face here the gravest weakness of democracy —a weakness tested out in the fiery ordeal of the great war: Is democracy able to create disciplined effort as does an autocracy? The war has shown that it can, and a discipline that is even more powerful than that of absolutism.

So, likewise, the young people of Methodism will have to demonstrate that under freedom they can be depended on to be loyal to the church, regular in attendance upon the services of public worship, faithful in Christian work and in their personal religious habits and, above all, resolutely Christian in their daily lives.

The Missionary Spirit. One more heritage from the glorious past of the church remains to be mentioned, and it is mainly a heritage from American Methodism, although it was the genius of the church from the beginning. It is the missionary spirit that

has made Methodism one splendid adventure for God and humanity.

The Wesleyan revival reached America less than ten years before the opening of the Revolutionary War. The church was thus a century and a half late on the American continent as compared with its sister denominations; yet it has outstripped them all in numerical strength. The causes of this are manifold, but among them missionary zeal stands out most prominently. American Methodism has been a fiery missionary movement, based on evangelism and religious education.

It would be difficult to discover a more thrilling story of adventure in any land than that of the itinerants who kept abreast of the great wave of pioneers who from the time of the Revolutionary War moved westward over the Allegheny Mountains into the Mississippi Valley, westward after the Civil War over the great plains beyond the Mississippi, westward over the Rocky Mountains until they stopped at the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

Francis Asbury, who led this movement during the early years of the last century and put his stamp upon it, lacked the social vision and the broad education of John Wesley, but he was by nature a missionary as well as an intense worker, a capable administrator, and a friend of education. He and his itinerants and the two generations who followed them, preceding the present generation, planted Methodism deep and strong in the heart of the South and West and made the church preponderant in many States. They accomplished this by incessant labors of evangelism, by the instruction of children,

and by founding everywhere seminaries and institutions of higher education.

The missionary zeal that gave Methodism such a preeminence in American life caused the church a hundred years ago, when it was poor, to establish the first of its foreign missions. These now girdle the globe and constitute a vast and amazingly successful enterprise for the salvation of the non-Christian world as well as for Christian work in South America and on the continent of Europe. American Methodism has made Methodism a world movement. As this book is being written, the missionary societies are preparing to celebrate this century of missionary triumph by a period of unparalleled missionary education and giving.

This, then, is our heritage, bequeathed to us from the labors of the Wesleys and the work of our fathers. It is a great and noble legacy of high endeavor and uncompromising devotion to Christ. Sometimes young people are deceived by the show of things and are led by the very plainness and earnestness of the church and by the fact that it is such a church of the people to fail to realize that these are the qualities which most commend it and which show that it is after the mind of Christ. May the young people of American Methodism, North and South, be worthy the possession of such a heritage. May they carry the banners forward and upward in their own generation.

Thought Questions

1. Why do the beginnings of Methodism appeal to young people?

2. What were the main characteristics of Wesley's work?

3. What place did he give to social service in the great awakening?

4. Do you think the church can depend on the loyalty of its young people if it leaves them free to think and free to act? Why?

5. Why did Methodism grow so rapidly when it came to America?

6. Is your church alive? Is it doing the two kinds of work which Wesley did? What should it do that it is not doing?

CHAPTER II

THE PURPOSE AND PROGRAM OF THE MODERN CHURCH

No statement of purpose in New Testament.—The Great Commission of Jesus.—Is the church needed to-day?—The answer.—The purposes of the church: to develop Christian character and to bring in Christian social order.—The two great commandments of Jesus: First, to love God supremely.—To inspire, to instruct, and to train individuals. Second, to redeem society.—Social service. Cooperation with social agencies.—These two purposes one.—Application to local church.—Its relation to its neighborhood and community.—The program of a local church.—Its necessity.—A survey of the field.—Cooperation with other agencies at work.

NOWHERE in the New Testament is there a definite and authoritative statement of just what the church is to do and what it is not to do. Christ left it to work out its own program. It may be free to do at any given time what manifestly needs to be done, to use those methods which promise to be most effective, and to adjust itself to the spirit of different ages and different peoples. The result has been that the church, while continuous and permanent beyond the stability of the governments of the earth, has yet been ever changing, ever broadening, ever advancing; and the freer it has been to adjust itself to the conditions of the world to which it has been sent, the greater has been its redemptive power.

Christ himself gave to the church its eternal chal-

lenge in his own last commission to the disciples: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This commission has been the watchword of the church during all the Christian centuries and has guided its great endeavors in every land and age.

But it has been a long time since this command of Jesus was spoken. The world of to-day is much larger than the world of the first century. Society is more complex, and the relationships of life very much more intricate than in the days of our Lord. Many persons are asking if society has not outgrown the institution of the church and no longer needs to give it an important place in its life. These critics profess to believe in religion—yea, even in Christianity—but for the church they do not seem to find a worthy place in their thinking. The answer to this doubt, to which we must give the credit of being honest, is the fact of the church itself. It is here at work in human society marshaling the loyalty of millions of people and constantly extending the range of its influence to the remotest parts of the earth. And it has back of it more than nineteen centuries of noble history.

The church, however, is not an end in itself. It is a divine human agency for the bringing about of a certain goal in human life. It is concerned not with its own development as an institution but with the development of persons, the creation of

Christian character. The church can be best judged by the kind of people it makes. However wildly or earnestly men may talk to the contrary, the world has never yet discovered a better means of saving human lives for service and leavening the social order than the Church of Jesus Christ. It may and will change with the changing centuries, but in its nobler forms it will abide as the center of the world's hope of a better day.

We are now prepared to ask more definitely, What is the purpose of the church? Without attempting a technical definition we may say that the church exists to develop Christian character in individual men and women and to bring about a Christianized social order both in our local communities and throughout the world. Jesus himself summarized the gospel and the mission of his church in the two great commandments, to love God supremely and to love one's neighbor as one's self (Mark 12. 28-33).

The first and great commandment, as Jesus called it, leads the church straight into its wonderful spiritual mission. It means worship and prayer and the culture of the inner life of humanity. It means the winning of men to Christ, and the religious nurture of children. To take the individual people of the world, beginning in earliest childhood; to single them out so that the church sees not a mass of people but George and Mary, James and Alice, and knows them intimately; to see that these, one by one, are instructed and awakened until each makes his or her own consecration to Christ and comes to know God each in his own soul—that is the first and supreme purpose of the church in the modern world.

I do not hesitate to say that the church's ministry to the inner life is the most vital factor in the progress of humanity.

Let every young disciple of Christ take that great commandment to himself. Not only is it his duty to love God himself, to keep his own windows of prayer open toward heaven, to take his place in divine worship Sunday after Sunday, but it is his larger duty to carry that gospel to the whole world. A true disciple of Christ is a missionary to the depth of his soul.

When I say this I think of the words of Isaiah, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" And I say of the young people whose hearts respond to the Master's call, and who work for him at home or overseas, How beautiful are the lives of those who catch Christ's vision of the kingdom of heaven, and join in its great purposes!

The second commandment, said Christ, is like unto the first—that is, it stands up beside it in importance: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This he immediately interpreted by the parable of the good Samaritan. He also explained the saying at a later time by the parable of the sheep and the goats, which is recorded in the latter part of the twenty-fifth chapter of Saint Matthew. Most wonderful of all, he made plain what it all meant by his compassionate life. When our Lord made untrained Galilæan fishermen his companions, when he stood up for those who were shamed and outcast, when he fed the multitudes and healed the sick, when he arraigned the tyranny of those who were leaders

of the people, when he preached the gospel to the poor, he was carrying out the second great commandment.

The second commandment leads straight into social service, as the first leads into worship and soul-winning. It means right relations among men and organizations created by men, and among races and governments. It means a righteousness based upon love as distinguished from that which is merely legal and customary; which does not ask first, What are my rights? What can I get? but, What will advance the general good?

The second commandment takes the church into the new great cooperation which is forming for a Christian social order—into public health; into equal rights and opportunities for women with men; into the abolition of alcoholism, poverty, and disease; into the new internationalism from which racial hatred, armament, and wars are banished; into honest and efficient government and the enlarged use of governmental machinery for the welfare of the masses; into the spread of democracy and its increasing application to the internal affairs of nations.

These are immensely important problems. The politics of the future will center about them, and the strength of the nation will depend on what is done. It would be unpardonable for young people who are soon to become citizens to have no interest in them or to be uninformed. No ardent knight of the Middle Ages embarking upon one of the crusades had such a thrilling call to chivalric devotion as the call that sounds to the youth of America in this hour.

The world is deeply sunk in the commonplace. It hopes but dimly for the better day of the kingdom of God. It is confused, blinded by selfishness and indulgence, and half dumbly lives from day to day. It struggles and suffers and sees no shining way out of its miseries.

These Two Purposes Are One. The church has a divine message for this world. In the first commandment it has a message of a spiritual world, of immortal life, of the eternity of goodness, of God's infinite love, power, and righteousness, of daily help from heaven for life's commonest tasks. In the second commandment it has a glorious social vision with which to inspire the world and an imperative call to duty.

These two commandments are really one. They are a divine love, going up to God like fragrant incense and reaching out to humanity like a mother's arms. Christ never distinguished between spiritual ministry and social service, and a day will come when the church will put them together. It will then understand the "glad tidings," which is what the word "gospel" means. The real gospel is the two commandments fused together by a love like the love of Christ. Nothing short of this is the gospel of the kingdom of God, and the bringing in of this kingdom is the supreme purpose of the church.

These principles apply with peculiar force to the local churches of Methodism. It is in the local church that the great problems of personal religion and of social transformation are to be worked out. Fortunately, it is here that we all get a chance to do something. Young people are brought up in the

local church. Here they receive their religious education, including their training in service; here they first begin to work for Christ in Sunday school and Epworth League; and here later they take their place as men and women in the direction of the church.

The subjects of evangelism and missions and the ministry of the church to the inner life are considered in later chapters,[1] so they need not be discussed in this connection; but it is important to consider the relation of the local church to the life of its own neighborhood and to the larger community in which it is situated.

Let us right here make some distinctions. A church has its immediate neighborhood or, as the Episcopalians say, its parish, in which its main work is done, and in which it works from house to house. It has then its community, which is the entire countryside or village or town or city. In villages and small towns the neighborhood and community are identical, but in cities and sometimes in the open country there are often many neighborhoods in a community. Churches have been accustomed in the past to think only of individuals and not of neighborhoods and communities. But a new era has set in, and henceforth we must think also of neighborhoods and communities and of the church's relations to them. Communities are made up of people, but also of factories, stores, churches, schools, libraries, clubs, places of recreation, evil resorts, boarding houses, newspapers; charitable, civic, and industrial societies. These or the lack of them vitally affect the happiness and welfare of the people and are there-

[1] Chapters III and IX.

fore of deepest concern to the church. They are also directly related to the success of the spiritual work that the church is trying to accomplish and cannot therefore be overlooked.

The Program of the Church. What the church is to do, and the adaptations it must make in its work are determined by the character of its neighborhood and community. It is one thing to work in the open country, another in a village, another in a county-seat town, another in the suburb of a city, another in a section like Fifth Avenue, New York, another in a tenement neighborhood, another near a great factory, another in a downtown business area, another in a territory where "down-and-outs" congregate. Many ministers make the fatal mistake of attempting to do the same kind of work in the most different kinds of neighborhoods. One of the tragedies of our denominational life is an unchanging local church in a changed community.

Manifestly, then, the first problem in working out an intelligent program for a local church—and every church should have such a program—is to study its community. This requires the survey[1]: a house-to-house and most searching inquiry into population, living conditions; social, religious, educational, civic, and charitable agencies; industrial concerns, opportunities for recreation, evil resorts, religious affiliations, nationalities, and manifest needs that should be met. These facts should be gathered by volunteer workers under the direction of the pastor, and the results should be tabulated, shown on charts,

[1] For fuller details regarding the survey see The Church and Community Survey, Carroll.

and finally digested for the enlightenment of the congregation. Out of such studies come intelligent programs of church work.

Every church should get into touch with the various agencies and institutions in its own neighborhood and, in a city, with any federation of churches that may exist and with as many as possible of its civic and social agencies. The church will prove an invaluable ally to these agencies, especially in arousing the public to their work and maintenance, and they in turn will rally to the church in its own difficult work.

Young people should early learn the meaning of cooperation and of community work, for in the future of the church these will play the great part. It will soon be unpardonable for a church to pursue a selfish policy of working by itself. In a few years every serious undertaking will be community-wide, and each church will have its own distinct place in common effort. Public health, public recreation, control of vice, housing, education, religion, will be looked after in this comprehensive manner, and every local church will need to be built into this wider effort with great care and intelligence.

Thought Questions

1. Did Christ lay out the program of the church in details? Why?
2. What principles are to guide the church in developing its work?
3. Where does the first commandment lead us?
4. Where does the second commandment lead us?
5. What is the real gospel of the kingdom?
6. What is meant by a community? A neighborhood?

7. What do you understand by a survey? Would you like to help in one?

8. Has your church a community program? Has it made a survey of its neighborhood or community?

9. Draw up an outline program that would suit your church and community.

CHAPTER III

BUILDING THE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The program impossible without effective spiritual local churches.—What does it mean to be a Christian?—No definite answer in New Testament.—Not believing a creed, nor observing rules, nor simply doing good, nor a certain state of emotions, nor being a church member. —Being a Christian is to be a friend of God.—This involves helping others, building a Christian democracy. —The church's service to those outside.—Evangelism. —Individual work for individuals.—Its necessity and dangers.—The revival meeting; Its reasonableness.— Some ways to cooperate; Living for Christ, Attending services, Prayer.—Helping one another in the Christian life.—Christ the Builder and the new kingdom.

An automobile is driven by a motor. However beautiful its coloring or luxurious its upholstery, it is the kind and quality of its motor that determines its ability to carry heavy loads and go long distances. There is no use talking about taking a transcontinental trip in a car with a defective motor. The machine itself must be in first-class condition before it becomes an agent of service to the owner or community.

We have just had a glimpse of the program of the modern church, extending as it does from the Christianizing of all the life of the local community to the bringing about of international good will in a democratic social order. The church—indeed, the

aggregation of local churches—is to bring into actual life this dream of Christian progress. It is therefore well for us to look at the improvement and development of this great spiritual force itself. The church is "not a field but a force," and we must build up and strengthen the church in order that it may discover and meet the need of our new day. We must see that the ideals of a Christian society find their expression constantly in the life of the individuals composing the church and in the thought of the group as a whole. We must create the Christian fellowship in local churches before we can, through them, bring in a Christianized world order.

The Meaning of the Christian Fellowship. What does it mean to be a Christian? This question has puzzled many conscientious young people who because of their inability to answer it have gone on blindly in the Christian life without the assurance of a well-grounded faith, the witness of the Spirit to their spirits that they are the children of God. What would Christ tell us if he could speak to us to-day? Where would he put the emphasis? If we could find out the mind of Jesus on this inquiry of the human heart, would it not be final for us?

A study of the New Testament will answer our question. So large and comprehensive a subject we cannot expect to find covered in the few lines of a definition, but, deducing some reasonable conclusions from what Jesus did say and did not say, we shall come near to the heart of the whole question. We remember that our Lord was constantly seeking to make clear to the Pharisees how false was their conception of religion and to set over against it his

own fuller and more spiritual ideal. It seems necessary, therefore, to look first of all at some conceptions of the Christian life which Jesus himself repudiated. While in each of them there is a truth, it is not the center of the reality of the Christian experience.

In the first place, being a Christian is not believing a creed. Christianity has its creeds, its formal statements of belief, but Jesus never put these intellectual barriers in front of men and shut them out of the kingdom because they could not say *credo*. He chose unlettered Galilæan fishermen as his disciples, and they found their creed through the channels of a living fellowship with Jesus. So to-day a creed is not the first step. Indeed, such a formal statement of belief is impossible until it has been made our own in the school of experience, and comes rather at the end than at the beginning of the Christian life.

It is just as true that being a Christian does not consist in observing certain rules of behavior or ceremonial observances. This was the error of the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' time. They thought that if they kept the law of Moses perfectly, they would be perfect men. But Jesus tells them squarely that it is possible to keep the rules and regulations of the Old Testament and at the same time overlook the weightier matters of truth and justice. The sons of God are no longer under bondage; they have freedom in their Father's house. Now, let us be very sure that we do not turn this liberty into selfish license. Let us not think, though, that the heart of the Christian religion is in keeping laws and rules.

We do keep them, but only because in this way we can express that which is the higher law—the spirit of Jesus in us. Morality must not be confused with Christianity.

Does the Christian life consist in doing good? Of course it does, but this is the outward manifestation of a reality within for which we must seek. Many people confuse philanthropy with Christianity and see only the good Samaritan on the pages of the New Testament. The ancient Pharisees tithed and did alms deeds, but at heart Jesus called them hypocrites, "whited sepulchres . . . full of dead men's bones." Charity and brotherly service are splendid forms of manifesting the Christian spirit, but what lies back of such benevolence? It is to that question that we press.

Some people have sought to make religion and a certain state of the emotions one and the same thing. They place in the realm of feeling all the reality of the Christian experience. But this can never be the test, because temperaments vary, and the same set of facts affect people differently. Some are exuberant and demonstrative, others are quiet and thoughtful. Because I do not feel just as another does is in no way a discount on the experience of either of us. The glorious experience of being saved from sin and entering into the new life in Christ should make us very happy, but the secret of joy lies not in the feelings only. It combines feeling and intellect and will. These words from a well-known Methodist theologian well express the truth: "The Christian who has but little feeling and yet serves God steadfastly and faithfully from prin-

ciple may and should have the quiet and abiding assurance that he is a child of God no less than his fellow Christian whose heart and temperament are such that he often 'bubbles over' with fervent and pious emotions."

And, finally, some have confused church membership with being a Christian. We all believe unhesitatingly that every Christian ought to be a member of Christ's church, but in this external relationship the essence of religion does not consist. Will the final basis of judgment before the throne of God be merely church membership? We know only too well that there are many within the church who know not Christ, so we cannot place the reality there.

Christ said one day to some men who were busy at the business of trying to be religious: "Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life, . . . and ye will not come to me, that ye may have life" (John 5. 39*a*, 40). Surely, then, we shall find the very heart of religion somewhere close to Jesus. "Come unto me"; "follow me"; "Take my yoke upon you"; "Learn of me." These are the words with which he summons men to the higher levels of life. And here is the reality for which we seek. To be a Christian is to be a friend of God as he is made known to us in the person of Jesus Christ.[1] To be the friend of Christ is our privilege. Jesus said, "Ye are my friends." If we are indeed his friends, we shall not be willing to live in sin, because it will grieve him; we shall seek to share his great, divine purpose

[1] See The Christian Life a Normal Experience, Weatherford.

for all the world, and hence shall be always active in his service. Let us think, then, of our religious life as a normal experience and see how fully it fits into the terms of the higher friendship. Then we can have for our life a purpose no less clear than this: The faith that Jesus had I will seek to have; the love he showed to men I will try to show; the spirit of Jesus I will seek to make my spirit; the life he lived I will try to live; what Christ was I will strive to be. Whenever we can underwrite a life purpose such as that we need not worry about our experience or our acceptance with God.

A Christian Democracy. The very idea of the church is wrapped up in the ideal of a growing Christian experience. Sometimes young people misconceive the term "saved." They seem to think that salvation is a finished process, and that once aboard the old ship of Zion they can rest from their labors and be sure of a safe landing on the heavenly shores. But the church is to help us work out our salvation, and salvation is a gradual, growing process by which we are changed from the natural man into the spiritual man and attain at last unto the stature of the fullness of Christ Jesus. Therefore, the Christian life is a great adventure with God, in which every soul fares forth for himself, helps his brother along the road, and comes at last into the presence of the King, who, under the guise of the Holy Spirit, has ever been by his side to strengthen and uplift. "All for each and each for all" is the motto of the true church.

The Church of God is a unique organization. Its foundation is Jesus Christ, and its platform is Chris-

tian democracy. It seeks to gather within its fold men and women of all ages and stages, of all conditions and races. It knows no distinctions in class, it bars no individual whatever may be his social standing. It stands in the portal ways of the temple of humanity with outstretched arms to welcome into fellowship all who would know and follow Christ. It is our privilege to-day to exemplify those principles of Christian democracy which must at last rule the world.

Reaching the Outsider. The church cannot be indifferent to the great non-Christian world around it. By the very terms of its commission it is to seek and to save. It is to be an evangelizing force in society. Jesus trained his disciples and then sent them out to spread the good news. He is depending on his modern disciples, the members of his church, to spread the story of his saving power. All around us men and women are living empty and selfish lives; young people are missing the real joys of living because they do not know the richness of life in Christ Jesus. They are in the grip of sin, slaves to bodily passions, victims of their own baser selves. Are we who know the liberty and joy of the Christian experience to speak no friendly word to them? Are we not our brother's keeper? Can we keep a love we do not share? Jesus bids us follow his own example and go out after the wandering and the lost.

1. *Individual Work for Individuals.*—No method of evangelism is more uniformly successful than that of dealing with individuals one by one. Where lines of contact have been established one may lead another naturally and simply into the Christian life.

Jesus himself used this method. No fewer than seventeen such personal interviews between the Master and an individual are recorded in the Gospels. Nothing is more natural than that we should desire to share our happy Christian experiences with others. A word of testimony to an unchristian friend is better than many sermons. We are sometimes deterred from bearing this personal word for Christ by a feeling of personal unworthiness, but we must remember that God does not wait to save the world with perfect men and women. We must make our lives as Christlike as we can and then do his bidding, trusting to him for strength and guidance.

In no form of Christian service must we refrain more carefully from professionalism and cant. Let us not talk of an experience to which we are strangers, using phrases and Bible quotations that are meaningless to us. We must always have a thorough respect and reverence for the personal rights of the one to whom we are thus speaking, remembering at all times that so holy and personal a matter as one's relation to God must not be treated lightly or casually. Yet we are to be assured that the need of God is a very conscious need in most lives, and that seldom does it happen that one resents a sane and friendly approach on the subject of personal salvation.

2. *The Revival.*—The revival of religion has been a prominent feature of Methodism from the beginning of its history. Some of the most memorable revivals of the last century were led by Methodist preachers. Religion was a deeply serious matter to them, and they pleaded with impassioned ardor with

Method... Historical So... Southern California... Conference

the sinner until he knew the joys of a pardoning experience by the grace of God. Because these revivals were accompanied by many unrestrained outbursts of emotion with which the modern man is unfamiliar or which he holds as primitive and unworthy, the revival has in some quarters been discounted. On the other hand, modern religious psychology has come forward to reassure us that the laws underlying the revival of religion are sound, and that the revival has a permanent place in the experience of men. As there is a rebirth of nature in the springtime, so the human heart has seasons of refreshing and comes at times into a more vivid consciousness of God. This serves to bring into bolder relief the spiritual needs of our life and helps us to strengthen our wills for the continued fight for character.

No technical discussion of the revival is in place here. We may, however, look for a few moments at some of the attitudes that the youth of the church should take to the evangelistic program. A real revival is an enterprise that should enlist the hearty cooperation of all the Christian forces of the church.

a. *Living Every Day for Christ.*—In a railroad depot you may see this sign: "The best safety device is a careful man." So it may be said that the best credential of Christianity is a Christian man. If you will live the real, genuine Christian life, your witness for God will be steady and powerful. Men will find God in you and see and believe in the possibility of a Christian experience because they see it demonstrated in your life. That is the first and is always the biggest service you can render.

b. *Attending the Services.*—At no time should a Christian be more careful to make his influence count than at this time. Put the services first and consider it your duty for the time of the meeting to let nothing interfere with your attendance. Dr. Charles E. Jefferson forcibly puts it thus: "Church attendance is not a Christian's elective. It is an essential part of the confession which a follower of Jesus makes to the world, a part of the work which the Master expects him to perform." At no time is this more forcibly true than when the church is seeking to win the outside world.

c. *Pray for the Success of the Revival.*—It is distinctly a spiritual task the church seeks to accomplish. It can save no one. It can only bring men to Christ; he must save. Prayer is the key that unlocks the storehouse of power, that moves the indifferent heart, that brings down the showers of blessing upon the church. But we should make our prayers definite and personal. Should we not always have on our hearts a few special individuals in whom we are interested? God will open up to us wondrous and unexpected ways of reaching friends for whom in private we have prayed. Let us lay hold day by day of this means of grace and power.

Build One Another Up. The church is a great fellowship. Within it are to be found the strong and the weak, the mature Christian and the babe in Christ. Our Lord laid upon each believer the duty of being a helper to his weaker brother. "When once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren" was the word to Peter. The fact that each of us is different, and some are strong in one point, and

others are weak at the same place, suggests that it is our duty to build one another up in the Lord. The purpose of the church is the building of Christian character. That is God's task as well, and we are his fellow workers. As aids in this building process we shall not overlook the word of encouragement to the beginner in the Christian life, the expression of sympathy in the hour of sorrow, the bit of counsel to one in severe temptation, the prayer of intercession for our fellow workers, and, best of all, the gift of our Christian love to all who need it. Saint Paul built up his brethren in Christ by believing in them and lifting them by the sheer force of his love and tenderness.

Christ the Builder. Jesus said, "I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." With holy enthusiasm he has been building it through all the ages. Stone by stone it has reared itself higher and higher. Each Christian is one stone in that invisible temple of the Master Builder. Some are in the foundation, out of sight; others are in the midst of the wall. He is the great Corner Stone. The temple grows steadily through the years until it shall at last stand a completed edifice, resplendent in the glory of the new kingdom. There shall be no limits to this building of God. Like the Eternal City it shall lie foursquare, and through its gateways shall pass those of all nations and of all climes whose garments have been made white in the blood of the Lamb. No sin shall mar its portals. Jesus shall stand in the midst of it, for the church eternal, the temple of God, is a redeemed humanity.

Are you finding your place as a fellow worker with God in this eternal program?

Thought Questions

1. Has it been difficult for you to answer the question, What does Christianity mean to me?
2. Discuss in your own way the friendship idea of religion.
3. What is meant by the term "Christian democracy"?
4. How can church members best help one another?
5. What service can each member of this group render in the work of evangelism?
6. What is Christ's present relation to his church?

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH ORGANIZED FOR WORSHIP

What is worship? a duty or a delight?—Worship is the soul's communion with God.—Realizing God in nature. —In every heart an altar.—Social worship with our fellows.—Necessary.—Increases our offering to God.—Orders of worship are different.—Methodist order simple.—Need for more dignity.—Responsibility of youth.—Young people should help by reverently cooperating in service. —Worship is educative.—Helps individual life.—Educational value for social group, the Sunday school.—Graded worship.—Childhood and worship.—Worship has a goal.—Leads to service.—Jesus' example.

WHAT is worship? Is it going to church?—a disagreeable duty if the service is dull, a delightful experience if one's friends are there, and the music is good, and the minister has power? Is worship something one offers to God?—a kind of sacrifice, as when in the olden days men brought the grain of their fields and the firstlings of their flocks to be consumed on the altars of religion? Is worship a duty we owe to God?—which every loyal church member fulfils, so that when the service is over he may go home with a free heart, knowing that his obligation to God for that day is performed?

Or is worship something nobler?—at its best the highest act of the human spirit? Is it something we should long for and eagerly seek if we thoroughly

understood, and especially if it could be provided in forms of refinement and power?

These are questions that take us to the heart of the meaning of worship and also to its human weaknesses and limitations. One of the tragedies of worship is that it has to do with God and with all that is infinitely perfect and beautiful while at the same time it shares the imperfections of everything that is touched by human hands. But to remember this is to be saved from these very imperfections. Worship is of the soul, and the spirit of worship in one's heart lifts the plainest sort of a church and the roughest kind of a service into an exalted hour and a holy place.

Individual Worship. In its pure and simplest form worship is the communion of the soul with God. God is a Spirit, and the deepest and truest part of our natures is spiritual. When the spirit of man rises to meet the spirit of the living God, that is worship. This search of our souls for him is not because he demands our homage or because our praise can add to his glory, but it is the spontaneous and natural uplift of the heart of the creature seeking the fellowship of the Creator. "Worship is man's search for the society of God." It is the fragrant incense of love and reverence which the heart sends forth to Him who is infinite in intelligence, in power, and in goodness.

Worship is therefore something that men offered before altars were built or temples erected. It is something intensely personal, possible at any time and any place. It is what a sensitive person feels in the mountains when the glory of God breaks upon

him. It is what comes to one sometimes at twilight, when the stillness is so charged with a glorious Presence that it seems as if God must speak aloud.

Saint Paul wrote to his people at Corinth, "Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit." In every heart there is or should be a hidden altar, upon which there is offered every day to Almighty God a sacrifice of prayer, of deepest reverence, of devoted love. To open one's bedroom windows in the morning and, as one faces the light and drinks in the bracing air, to lift one's heart to God in praise—that is worship. To turn to God again and again during the day—in the schoolroom, on the streets, in store or factory, in the midst of a happy social gathering—and to lift a prayer or a voiceless emotion of love—that is worship.

Social Worship. But individual worship is not the highest worship. Worship is supremely a social act. There is a saying in Deuteronomy that one shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight. What is meant is that when one acts alone he is only one, but when two act together their power is greater than just one plus one. Something new and significant has entered. It is the brotherhood. Christ had this thought in mind when he said, in teaching about prayer, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven."

Christ stated the principle definitely in its relation to worship in the sentence immediately following, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Worship has reached its fullness of power when the presence of God is realized, and that is assured when even two or three are met in his name. If they assemble in the barest room or by the river-side, as the Christians at Philippi were wont to do, there they become corporate, and the experience of God's presence is revealed.

It is always so in earnest worship. When a hundred people or a thousand people meet in a church, each is quickened by every other. Rich and poor, educated and uneducated, employer and workingman, men, women, and little children are helped by the feeling of their brotherhood and their common relations to God. And God, invisible but in the midst of them, is more than all the rest. When, in addition, the church is designed for worship, and the service is enriched by architecture, by hymns, by sacred music, by Scripture, by prayer and sermon, worship becomes the most beautiful and the highest common act upon which men can enter. And because worship is a common or corporate act, every effort should be made for the fullest cooperation of the congregation. Common singing, common use of the Lord's Prayer, and of the collects, confession, and responses of the Holy Communion should be encouraged and developed.

It is true that a man may worship God by himself, but he should seldom want to worship alone when he can worship with others. There are times when a man wants to be alone and must be alone, when he goes to his closet or slips into the silent church to pray; but, as a rule, few men can trust themselves to being religious by themselves. They

grow careless and forgetful; they become absorbed in the activities of the world around them; they become secular and self-indulgent. Left alone, most people all but cease to pray, just as, if left alone, few young people would ever complete the grammar grades at school.

Therefore, the church is organized for worship and invests millions of dollars in buildings for public worship, and millions more in the conduct of worship, in the realization of its purpose to make it effective and inspiring.

Different Orders of Worship. The services of public worship in the different Christian churches vary greatly—from the simple, earnest services of the non-liturgical communions like the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Congregational, to the enriched and stately worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church and the elaborate symbolism and liturgy of the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches.

The non-liturgical churches are nearer to the spirit and religious habits of Christ and to the simple worship of the early Christian churches, whose meetings were much like those of the early Methodists, as one realizes who reads the book of Acts and the epistles. But the form of worship is not the primary fact; rather its earnestness and helpfulness and the spirit of those who are met together.

In our Methodist churches there is need of attention to the character of the services. We have earnestness and power, but we need dignity and beauty. Our places of worship should be less auditoriums and more houses of worship, with the symbolism of

religion built into the design of the structure and into the equipment and decorations of interiors. We have many unlovely and imperfect buildings because the official boards of churches have employed inexperienced and incapable architects, and because they have not realized that the house of God should be made beautiful.

In the conduct of public worship we have also much to improve. The music in many churches requires organization and elevation. The services are too informal; the Scripture is read without color; the sermons lack preparation; the people are wanting in reverence. In worship we are face to face with God, the infinitely true and good and beautiful, and this fact should be reflected in the dignity and harmony of the service.

Those who are now young people will soon have resting upon them the responsibility of making these necessary improvements in buildings and services. They will be members of the boards that employ architects and decide on the decorations of buildings. They will be ministers, musicians, ushers, and officials, and the church of the future will be what they make it.

Meanwhile, they are going to church, and they have it in their power to do something immediately. Every young person who enters a church reverently, who bows his head in prayer upon entering his pew, who keeps himself under discipline during the service, who enters heartily into every act of worship, has contributed something real to the value of the hour. These are habits which are acquired only with attention, and which congregations accustomed to

careless methods form but slowly. The presence in a congregation of one person who observes these customs is the most influential kind of teaching.

Young people should realize, therefore, that they have a great responsibility with regard to worship. The church services, as a rule, afford the best opportunity for worship, especially upon its social side. Therefore, they not only need to go to church, but it is their duty. It is their duty to God, to themselves, and to society. It is their duty to God because it is one of the things they can offer in return for life, with all its opportunities and happiness. It is their duty to themselves because the progress of their lives is bound up with God. It is their duty to society because the habit of churchgoing is a staunch witness to a careless world, because it makes him who worships strong and inspired for the service of humanity, and because in worship one shares his own deepest emotions and aspirations with those who sit around him.

Worship Educational. It must be constantly remembered that worship is educative. It is not simply a luxurious self-indulgence calculated to produce pleasurable sensations that urge to no goal of personal development. When men really worship they seek and find the way of life. It was because of this confidence in the reality of God speaking to his own listening heart that the psalmist could declare, "Thou wilt show me the path of life." Consider for a moment the cleansing of spirit and ennobling of purpose that comes to one who, in the impassioned words of the forty-second psalm, cries out:

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
So panteth my soul after thee, O God.
My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God:
When shall I come and appear before God?

. . . . . .

Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterfalls:
All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.
Yet Jehovah will command his lovingkindness in the daytime;
And in the night his song shall be with me,
Even a prayer unto the God of my life."

If such feelings can lift the individual into a realization of God's presence in his life, it can be seen readily that an even greater inspiration must be felt when a worshiping congregation or assembly of Sunday-school pupils join together in a service of common social worship. A superintendent of deep insight said recently, "If I could bring my entire school for thirty minutes every Sunday to realize that each one was actually in the presence of God, I believe that it would be of more value than the teaching of the lesson or any other part of the service." Such a statement suggests to us how great is the value of organized social worship and, also, how far we are from realizing its full educational value.

The Sunday school is awakening to the importance of a new conception of worship, but much needs to be done to bring about satisfactory results in most of our schools. The necessity for graded worship, like graded instruction, is becoming apparent. A

child does not realize God in the same way that an adult does; hence, worship must be suited to his stage of development, for it is founded upon intelligence in the worshiper and knowledge of him to whom worship is directed. The worship portion of the program is too sacred to be properly designated as "opening exercises." This part of the services of most schools is not satisfactory. It is too free and informal, too much interrupted by latecomers. The orchestra is too likely to play music suited to a jazz band, and the hymns are too likely to be religious ragtime selected with no thought as to appropriateness of sentiment.

The problem of worship is related also to children who attend the services with their parents. We shall soon come to a time where children will have a place in every morning service—a little sermon for them, a favorite hymn, a recognition of their presence. They will be brought in at the beginning and allowed immediately before the sermon to pass out to another room, where special instruction suited to their age will be given. But under no circumstances should they be wholly removed from the great congregation. It can be thus seen that our worship programs deserve the closest study so that they may be suited to the character and purpose of all the worshipers. Sunday-school worship will vary in form and content from church worship, but both will reach the same goal by differing methods of approach.

Why, then, do we worship?—to ask again a question suggested in the beginning of this chapter. We worship because the upreach of our spirits, either

alone or in the fellowship of others, is one way of realizing our better selves. Worship has a goal, however, even beyond personal development. It directly leads to service. We seek to know God in worshipful communion in order that we may impart to others this sense of the divine Presence. Worship cannot be self-centered; it must look to service in a world of need. When Jesus and his friends had communed face to face with God in the Mount of Transfiguration they turned to heal the multitudes in the valley below. In the garden Jesus talked with God, and out of its solemn hour of searching he turned to bear in love and glad submission the cross of the world's redemption.

Thought Questions

1. What is worship?
2. What is it to be religious by oneself?
3. What is the greater form of worship?
4. What are the advantages of going to church over being religious by oneself?
5. Do you think the worship of our Methodist churches should be more orderly and more beautiful?
6. Do you favor bowing one's head in prayer upon taking one's seat in a church?
7. Do you think children should go to church? Should they have a little sermon and then march out?
8. Do you think the opening services in Sunday schools should be more worshipful? Do you favor higher-grade music? Which do you think the better—common or departmental services of worship?
9. How might the worship of your own church and Sunday school be improved?

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH ORGANIZED FOR TEACHING

Purpose of religious education.—Its large aim in modern life.—Why so large a program in religious education? —New child psychology.—Many approaches to child life.—Science reveals law of growth.—Present evangelistic emphasis makes education more necessary.—Correlating all educational forces.—Two sets of agencies: (1) Agencies within the church itself. A list. Unifying them through educational committee. Its duties. The difficulty of this plan. Not impossible. (2) Agencies outside the church: The home. The public school. Some plans of correlation. The Sunday school the best agency to meet need. Must stress: Teacher training, graded courses, expressional activities, training in worship, weekday Bible schools.—The bigness of our educational ideal.

THE phrase "religious education" is distinctly a modern term. Not that the people of a former day did not believe in both of the fundamental ideas included in the expression, but they did not connect the concepts of religion and education in so intimate and vital a way as do the leaders of our present day. The Religious Education Association, not yet two decades old, has made a truly wonderful contribution to the whole subject. Its purpose "to inspire the educational forces of our country with the religious ideal and to inspire the religious forces with the educational ideal" has been a battle cry in the

crusade for a closer coordination of religious and educational forces. So much has been brought within the scope of this new emphasis that "religious education is in the foremost place in the interests of all who think in terms of this age."

This new movement in the field of religion has brought to us a clearer conception of the chief business of the church to-day.

The New Educational Ideal. There are some churches that yet proceed upon the theory that the salvation of the individual is the primary function of the church. True it always will be that the church must deal with the saving of individual men and women, but our dominant function is Christianizing the society in which these same men and women are to live and of which they are a part. You cannot have a Christian society without Christian individuals. Neither can you have a Christian individual in a godless society. Hence, the church is committed to "a program of life-development that is religious in aim, in method, and in its conception of the person being educated. It looks to the development of persons into the fullness of a religiously conceived social ideal."[1]

Some Christian people are slow to grasp this larger program of education and religion for the local church. Let us show now how certain outstanding points of emphasis in our modern religious thinking make this new approach to the church's educational task imperative.

In the first place, it is made necessary by our new study of child-life and religious psychology.

[1] Henry F. Cope, in Religious Education, Volume VIII, page 118.

Childhood a half-century ago was thought of simply as a necessary physical prelude to adult life. It is so regarded to-day in those lands where Jesus' conception of the child has never been appreciated. The adult is the central and sole interest of those who would bring in the Kingdom. But we have discovered the child in our midst, and he has become the object of our deepest inquiry and most painstaking culture. This is the child's century.

A new acquaintance with adolescent youth has come through a study of the child. The new child psychology has led us to find a score of ways to approach and deal with the religious natures of children where once we had but one—the imposition of an adult experience upon an unwilling but helpless subject. It is easy to see that, as we find these new interests of the human heart and discover all around us material to use in developing these interests, the training of youth through religious education becomes the absorbing task of the modern day.

In the second place, science has come to the help of religious thinking and reveals that in the external world the two clearest manifestations of the divine method of working are *law* and *growth.* Formerly we associated all God's activity with the sudden, unaccountable, tumultuous experience. Now we find him in the orderly processes of nature, and we look with more suspicion upon mysterious and unlawful manifestations of power. If the same is true in the realm of human experience—and true it is—it certainly reveals to us that the normal development of the whole personality of each individual by

processes of instruction and voluntary self-expression is the divine method. The church must therefore put its emphasis upon those means ordained of God for the best building of character. Christian growth is not a matter of a series of "lawless upheavals," but of development according to the law within and the Spirit above.

It is therefore certainly pertinent to say that the transitional stage in which we find ourselves in the matter of evangelism and the revival is a loud call for constant insistence upon the educational function of the church. If we are to adopt the modern educational method of Christian nurture, it goes without saying that the whole value of the method depends on the thoroughness and the effectiveness of the teaching and training that lead to the acceptance of Christ as Lord. If this method is to serve as effectively as it gives promise of doing, it must be built on sound educational and religious principles and practice.

But suppose we still put our main trust in the old-time emotional revival: is the case for teaching any less strong? Is not the admitted weakness of the old method that it fails at the point of Christian instruction? Too much of the seed falls on shallow soil, springs up, and then withers away. Religious education must prepare the soil in which the revival can do its work and must then rear to manhood and womanhood by careful training those rescued from a sinful life who are but babes in Christ. That each local church is called to the work of religious education must be our unescapable conclusion. It is its most glorious field of service.

The Correlation of Educational Agencies. The growing function of the church has made it necessary to examine critically the local church's ideals and organization to determine how far it is progressing toward the goal of becoming a worthy force for training as well as inspiring people. If education is its business, the church must be educationally self-respecting. It must not disdain candid and constructive criticism that leads to the proper readjustment of its working forces to achieve a worthy end. This brings up the question of correlating the educational agencies in the local church. Many thoughtful pastors and church leaders are working on this problem, and the brief discussion here cannot hope to do more than give an idea of the direction of the progress up to the present stage and set clearly before us the urgency of the demand for a greater unity in effort in each church.

There are two sets of educational forces in each community. We must study each in relation to our problem:

1. *The Educational Agencies within the Church Itself.*—These include the Sunday school, young people's societies, women's missionary societies, men's brotherhoods, boys' and girls' clubs and guilds, etc. Of the educational function of the pulpit we do not need to think in this particular scheme, although it is of the greatest importance. These agencies are all distinctly educational in their purpose. They seek to build up the membership by instruction and inspiration and expressional activities. At present each pursues its way with little reference to the other. Much overlapping occurs, friction occasion-

ally develops, and the unity of the church's program is broken up by the unrelated activities of a group of agencies all valuable in themselves. This is our problem. We must coordinate and unify our educational forces. This does not necessarily imply the abandonment of any of these agencies; it does imply, however, a sharper definition of the function of each and its place in the whole scheme. We shall never bring to reality these larger ideals unless we are willing to make precedent and prejudice secondary to real efficiency in church life.

The recent thought on this problem has led to the centering upon an educational committee of the church as the best means for correlation. This committee, composed of three, five, or seven, should be constituted from the leading men and women in the church who are interested in educational matters. The committee should be one of the standing committees of the church. The following list of duties will give some idea of the scope of the work falling under the direction of this important committee:[1]

(*a*) To study educational problems of the local church, including all organizations and all classes of members.

(*b*) To adopt curricula, textbooks, and general rules for all educational activities of the church.

(*c*) To select teachers and officers for all educational agencies.

(*d*) To exercise general supervision over the educational work of the church.

(*e*) To sit in council with other committees of

[1] See The Church School, Athearn, in which the idea receives fuller treatment.

the church and report back to the church such measures as seem commendable.

(*f*) To remove or transfer teachers or officers when necessary in the interest of efficient administration.

(*g*) To keep coordinate the plans of all the organizations of the church, in order to avoid duplication of effort and prevent the neglect of any phases of training essential to the best interests of the church.

(*h*) To recommend to the church board the modification, consolidation, or disbanding of any organization when such changes would enhance the general welfare of the total work of the church.

The executive head of this committee, of which the pastor is an *ex officio* member, should be the director of religious education, a man trained for the work of religious education. Many large churches are now able to employ such a teaching pastor, an expert in directing the entire educational program of the church. Smaller churches, without resources to employ such a man, must solve their problem by utilizing their pastor if his superior training in religious education has made him a natural leader. In many cases it will be necessary to select the best available person in the community. A man trained in educational methods is to be preferred. Once in charge of the responsible work of directing and correlating the educational activities of the church, no means must be spared to keep this leader in touch with the best methods through conventions, schools of methods and literature. Wonderful progress can be made through a real eagerness to learn and willingness to study.

This unifying process can be carried a step further

by calling together once a quarter all the representatives and officers of each organization under the control of the educational committee. Before this larger group will come the general discussion of the whole problem of the educational tasks of the church.

This plan will strike many as impracticable; for example, the powers given the educational committee will seem too inclusive. What effect will it have upon our connectional relationships and disciplinary regulations? While these are serious problems, it is the purpose here merely to point the way rather than furnish a uniform working scheme. No one who knows will deny the unrelated and often chaotic condition of our local church forces for education. We cannot rest in conscious inefficiency. "A blundering advance is better than a retreat that is faultless." We may not be able to reorganize in a day, but this ideal must be kept clearly before us.

2. *Educational Agencies Outside the Church.*—The range of the church's influence does not stop with the circle of its own organizations. Christian ideals are to leaven society. Two institutions ranking in importance with the church are the home and the public school. What is the relation of these to the educational mission of the church?

(*a*) The Home.—No one can be indifferent to the forces that are working in modern society to break down the home. It is the primary unit in society, and upon its religious character largely rests the strength of our entire Christian program. Hence, the home must be the constant subject of the church's uplifting touch.

It is becoming increasingly evident that the church

must soon put on a propaganda for the conservation of the Christian home, or disaster will come upon us. Religion must be carried to the home, and some more definite and workable plan discovered whereby the ideal of Christianity can be made a part of the working plan of every Christian family. This will come probably along these lines: an enlargement of the whole idea of the Home Department, the maintenance of parents' classes in our Sunday schools, the development of family worship, the suggestion of worthy literature for growing boys and girls, the education of parents in the matters of sex instruction and vocational guidance. The church can help parents to come to a realization of the part that it is necessary for the home to play in doing the work of the Kingdom.

(*b*) What shall be the relation of the church to the public school? We believe in the separation of the church and the state, but we do not mean thereby the separation of education and religion. There is a feeling among many educators that to keep all instruction in the fundamental principles of religious truth out of the public school is, while pretending to be a Christian nation, to ignore our most available agency for inculcating religious truth. Every local church should be vitally interested in the character of the public-school teachers in its community and should do its best to cultivate that cordial relationship between public school and church which will result in an interchange of ideals that will prove mutually beneficial.

Whatever may be the final decision of the American people as to the incorporation of religious in-

struction into the work of the public school, there is an urgent need just now for a thoroughgoing correlation of religious education with the public-school system. Many experiments in correlation are being made with varying success throughout the country. In some places the public school allows credit for the religious instruction given by the church, though the basis of credit varies. For example, in the North Dakota plan high-school credit is allowed on the basis of an examination given by the State; in Colorado the system is one of accrediting teachers and teaching conditions; in Birmingham, Alabama, credit is given in the elementary grades on the presentation of a certificate from the Sunday-school teacher covering the pupil's attendance, diligence, faithfulness, and development. In other places correlation is obtained not through a system of credit but through a modification of the public schools' time schedule so as to allow the church to conduct courses in religious education during the week. Examples of such efforts are seen in the well-known Wenner plan and the Gary plan.

The High Calling of the Sunday School.[1] In all this program the Sunday school is to play a leading part. No other agency of the church lends itself so immediately to the full educational plan as this mighty force. Its progress, within the past twenty-five years, both in numbers and general effectiveness, is wonderful and should inspire us with confidence as to the still greater service it can render the kingdom.

[1] The name "church school" more accurately expresses its true function and should come into popular use.

Methodist Historical Society Southern California - Arizona Conference

To meet the demands in its new educational responsibility the Sunday school must lay increasing stress upon four phases of its work:

1. *Teacher Training.*—No longer can we conduct a real school with teachers who are almost wholly unqualified for their work. The character of work will not rise higher than the equipment, spiritual and intellectual, of the teacher. Every school must recognize as among its primary functions the training of its own leadership.

2. *Graded Courses of Study.*—The rapid recognition that there must be both graded worship and graded instruction marks our largest advance toward an educational ideal. Whether a school shall use a graded series of courses is no longer debatable. The school that does not recognize and apply this principle needs a jolt that will awaken it from its self-satisfied stupor.

3. *Expressional Activities.*—The familiar saying that what is unexpressed dies, is nowhere more pertinent than at this point. The Sunday school must make provision for working out the principles taught. Not until the child or youth thus makes them his own in the field of his own experimenting will they bring to him a personal working faith.

4. *Training in Worship.*—The aim of the Sunday school is not merely instruction. It does not follow of necessity because a pupil has been thoroughly drilled in the facts of the Bible that therefore he is a Christian. The modern Sunday-school program gives a large place to developing the worshipful attitude on the part of the pupils. To bring each person in attendance into the conscious presence of

God for a few moments every Sunday is one of the splendid privileges presented to officers and teachers of the school. The Sunday school has the very finest opportunity to train the youth in habits of reverence and worship, and we may look for increasingly marked development in this phase of its work.

5. *Week-day and Vacation Schools.*—One of the most interesting recent developments is that of week-day schools for religious teaching and vacation Bible schools under the auspices of the local church or a group of churches. The church building is used, and the teachers are experienced religious workers. These schools are becoming increasingly popular as it is being realized that the public schools cannot teach the Bible and that the short period of sixty minutes a week which the church has in which to teach the child is lamentably inadequate. As the necessity for more religious education in our American life becomes apparent, we may look confidently for a large development of such schools. And no thinking person will begrudge the additional demand for time involved in the plan.

As we have thus rapidly sketched the educational program of the church, is it too much to ask that we shall believe that we are called to an even larger task than that outlined above? Are we not to lay hands upon every necessary and normal exercise of life and make it an educational force for righteousness? Education is bigger than instruction. We must learn that play is educational, that work may build character, that social life can be made to minister to the higher interests. To fill all life with the religious ideal—nothing less than this can satisfy

the Christian purpose. "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Thought Questions

1. What is the weakness of the old-time emotional revival as a method of helping individuals?
2. Are modern psychology and child-study an embarrassment or an aid to religious workers?
3. Can you find any conflicts or overlapping among the educational agencies in the local church of which you are a member.
4. What is really wrong with the home to-day?
5. How can the church help to preserve the modern home?
6. What is being done to train teachers in your church?

CHAPTER VI

THE CHURCH ORGANIZED FOR SOCIAL SERVICE

Methodism's first emphasis social.—Eighteenth century Methodism stressed evangelism rather than social service.—The return to a social emphasis.—Hugh Price Hughes.—New social epoch in America.—Our new task a social one.—This demands organization in the local church.—The social center idea.—Varied ways of expressing this social idea in communities.—Local church must cooperate with all local social agencies.—Also with national and international social needs.—The call to youth.

No church ever had a nobler beginning in social service than Methodism. Attention was called in the first chapter to the circumstance that the young men at Oxford who organized the Holy Club received their inspiration from a study of Christ's own teachings and work, and that they immediately combined the social service of the New Testament with their spiritual activities.

Character of Eighteenth-Century Methodism. During the eighteenth century Methodism ceased to emphasize social service and became in the main an exclusively evangelistic force. In his "Letters to Young Ministers on the Importance and Methods of Study," published in 1828, Dr. Nathan Bangs makes no reference to social conditions or social

studies. Francis Asbury, who more than any other single person determined the character of American Methodism during that century, did not possess the social spirit and vision of Wesley, although a man of singular devotion and power. This evangelistic emphasis of the last century was undoubtedly providential, since it fitted Methodism to the needs of a vast pioneer movement of population and gave the church its commanding place in American life.

In characterizing nineteenth-century Methodism as in the main exclusively evangelistic one must remember, however, that this is a matter of emphasis in teaching, for the church was really socially-minded. Asbury opposed slavery, and the church was finally rent asunder by this issue. Asbury and his successors put forth prodigious effort to provide educational opportunities for the people at large at a time when education was the greatest social service that could be offered. American Methodism from its earliest days has also kept at the forefront of the movement for temperance and prohibition.

The Return to the Social Emphasis. The reassertion of Wesley's point of view on social service and evangelism and the restoration of Methodism as a social force were begun in England under the leadership of Hugh Price Hughes, the founder of the West London Mission. He started twenty-five years ago what was known as the Forward Movement. This movement resulted in the imposing Wesleyan mission halls of English cities, in the formation of the Methodist Union for Social Service, and in a permanent interest by English ministers and laymen in social questions.

The influence of the Forward Movement was felt in America and stimulated American Methodism to like efforts, resulting in the Methodist Union for Social Service and in a strong and growing interest in the application of the principles of the Christian religion to society. But in America the church has been profoundly influenced by the conditions of American life and in its social undertakings has struck out on original lines. It has led the movement for temperance and prohibition. It has had an inspiring development in hospitals, settlements, socially minded churches, and in the work of its home and foreign missionary societies. The church is rapidly organizing social education in the Sunday school and has already given to the nation a disproportionate share of leaders in the American social movement.

We are now entering upon a new epoch in the religious life of America and of the world. This may be indicated briefly by saying that, whereas a generation ago religion was thought of in terms of personal salvation, and few people had any hopes of a world salvation, we now realize that there is no social danger that society is not able to overcome, and no social problem that it is not able to solve. This conception of salvation comes as a glorious new hope breaking like a great light over humanity. We are now convinced, not only that the men of the world are to be evangelized personally, but that society itself is to be rebuilt on the basis of Christ's teachings.

This amounts to a transformation in point of view and is one of the most significant developments that

have taken place in the history of Christianity. It demands of the church an enlargement of faith and a greatness of effort, such as the world has never known or had the courage to imagine. Nothing more positively demonstrates that the spirit of God is working in the midst of humanity, and that the kingdom of God is surely to be established in the world.

Here we come face to face with the problem of the place of the church in the generation that is just ahead, and particularly as to the part it is to undertake in the development of this social movement. Speaking mainly from the point of view of the local church, the forms of social service that are possible may be grouped under four heads: ministries of kindness, opportunities afforded by the church as a social center, service of the church in the larger life of its community, the fight of the church for a Christian social order.

If one were to work as Christ worked he would begin from the point of view of the parables of the good Samaritan and of the sheep and the goats; that is, he would begin with ministries of kindness. By ministries of kindness one means such activities as provision for the relief of suffering and poverty, work for the unemployed, the defense and care of neglected children, thoughtful ways of contributing to the happiness of the sick, aged, and shut-in, the cultivation of a sincere and democratic friendship within the church with especial regard to the ministry to strangers, and personal service of many kinds such as churches always learn when they begin to work with the spirit of love.

Organizing the Local Church for Service. These ministries do not come of themselves. A church is as likely to be selfish as it is to be thoughtful and kind. Ministries of kindness require to be thought out and established in all the organizations of the church. Above all, the spirit of brotherliness must come to reign in every heart. To go about doing good—that is the basic social service. Nothing in the world is more inspiring than a church which has become animated by this spirit. Such ministries unlock doors that no other keys will open and soften hearts that are adamant to other appeals. They lay foundations for powerful evangelism, since people believe in those who love and who express that love in deed as well as in word.

The conception of the church as a social center is a most interesting one. In the first place, every church is such a center, and one of the most natural and wholesome in existence. A social center is a gathering place for the people of a neighborhood. They may meet for recreation, or study, or to work together, or for a pleasant evening with friends, or for worship. In a church they meet for all these purposes. A church is the most desirable form of social center outside the home, because it has such varied interests, because it brings together people of both sexes and of every age, and because it exists in the atmosphere of religion.

The significance of the church as a neighborhood center is doubly enhanced by the swift progress of prohibition and the coming of the short-hour day. The church must assist the people in making the right use of leisure time, and it must help to provide

safe and wholesome places in which to spend evenings. For it should be remembered that the church is almost wholly responsible for prohibition, and also, in some measure, for the shorter work day. When one considers that there are two hundred and twenty-five thousand churches in the United States, with forty million members, and that these churches are well organized and planted at the center of every neighborhood, it is easy to understand the present value of the churches as social centers, and their enormous possible influence.

Those who hesitate at the thought of a church as a social center should remember what happened at Pentecost, when those who believed had everything in common and ate their bread together in the homes in which they held their meetings. To enlarge the church as a social center does not of necessity mean to turn it into an athletic club. To meet for worship on Sunday morning or at Sunday school; to go to prayer meeting or to a missionary society; to come together as a club for Bible study or to do Christian work—these are high forms of social-center activities, although doubtless most social workers will be slow to think of them as such.

But that is not enough. In addition to the services of worship and prayer every age group in the church requires its own organization. Women turn to the aid society and missionary societies. Men like a club or brotherhood, with dinners, large Bible classes, and meetings for the discussion of religious and social questions.

Men and women who think these activities perfectly allowable forget that young people and chil-

dren have their own special interests, for which it is as important to provide as for adults. Almighty God has made it so that the supreme interest of young people is the mingling of the sexes, and to provide social opportunities for them is to work with God. Boys and girls like clubs, outdoor life, gymnasium play; and young people have the same wholesome interests.

The problem of the church is to provide for these natural interests as fully as it is able, with as little neighborhood duplication as possible, and to provide them in organized ways. There is little use to furnish a room and to say to the people, "Come in." They must be brought in by organizations, and, whenever possible, organizations for religious teaching and Christian work, with friendship incidental. Above all, everything that is done must be inspired by spiritual energy and controlled by religious purpose.

Finally, churches will be open every day and evening in the week and used to capacity. Is it not a waste of capital to make imperfect use of church buildings? In the future we shall build churches that are better adapted for everyday purposes. We shall have a part of the church designed especially for worship, never invaded by boisterous voices; and a parish house built like a well-appointed clubhouse, to which people will go with pleasure, unembarrassed by a sense of inappropriate uses.

Churches so organized are filled with people of every age. They are attractive because they meet natural needs and desires, and because of the charm of religion that is shed over them. Such churches

give evangelism its opportunity. Why cannot those who fear the organized church realize this? Once the people come to the building they are ready for whatever religious work the church has the spiritual power and courage to undertake.

Community and World-Wide Cooperation. But the social duty of the church is broader than its parish. It must ally itself with the forces and agencies of its community which are working for the common welfare. First in importance is the federation of churches, if there is one; then the associated charities, then the local government, then other social agencies such as schools, organized charities, labor bodies, civic and reform societies. In small towns and villages the number of such organizations is limited, but the importance of their working together is not less.

The church may take the lead in such work. It certainly should inspire it. The church should send its workers into community service as definitely as it sets them tasks in its own organizations. It should be a center for education in citizenship, and every good cause should have its sympathy and whenever possible its support. In poor relief and the rebuilding of broken homes and broken lives the church must have help from the outside, and because it must have help it is in honor bound to give help.

Community service passes naturally into the world-wide struggle for a Christian social order, into which Christianity is swiftly advancing. Let there be no misunderstanding here. The task before the churches is twofold: the salvation of men

everywhere, by which we mean their spiritual awakening, their religious education, their moral discipline; and the creation on the earth of a Christian world order. The two are really one and inseparable. In that new Christian society, which is coming so rapidly, ignorance, poverty, national hatred, extremes of need and luxury, war and armaments, alcoholism, class struggles, infectious diseases, the evil of burdensome toil, what is known as industrial slavery, will be brought under control and gradually abolished. The forces of democracy will invade and rebuild every institution of the world.

Let us not be misled by those who are so short-sighted as to decry the value of such social work. Let us remember that to bring about prohibition is to save a vast army of men from drunkards' graves and their wives and children from shame and poverty. To end the cruelty of seven-day work and long hours is to give several hundred thousand men a chance at home and church. A living wage means independence, education for children, beauty in the home, provision against sickness and old age, the possibility of going to church and taking one's part in its support. Good government means clean, safe, moral, beautiful cities and towns, where virtue is made easy, and vice difficult. Public health means freedom from sorrow and from the expense and suffering of illness. The abolition of vice insures the purity of the blood of the nation and the protection of women and children from unimaginable horrors.

Youth has its own serious work to do in this struggle for a better world; and what this work is, is being discovered and put into the teaching and

expressional activities of Sunday schools, clubs, and young people's societies. I have seen Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls doing the most effective and necessary work for one another, for the church, and for their community. I have seen revivals sweep through organized classes of boys, and the same boys show themselves more effective than pastors in restraining and rescuing their comrades from vice. But, on the whole, youth is a time of training for the greater service which is to follow, and one could wish that every young person were ambitious to take his place in the great social movement that is to bring in the better day that is even now dawning upon the world.

Thought Questions

1. What were the main characteristics of American Methodism up to 1900?
2. Who was Francis Asbury and what did he do?
3. What is the new point of view of religion in relation to the world around us?
4. What is meant by ministries of kindness?
5. What is meant by a church as a social center? Do you approve of the idea? Why? Is your church open every day? Should it be?
6. Should the church work with other agencies in the community? Will this harm or strengthen the church?
7. How is social service related to the spiritual welfare of people?

CHAPTER VII

MAKING THE CHURCH ORGANIZATION EFFICIENT

Two views of a church.—An organism.—The place of organization.—Essential to life.—Its dangers.—The efficiency test demanded to-day.—What is an efficient church?—Definition of efficiency as applied to church.—Unifying the forces for efficiency.—The Church Council.—Composition of Council.—Advantages seen in its organization in a church.—Relation to official board.—Efficiency in action, getting results.—A few practical suggestions: Know your field. Concentrate on essential issues. Study human nature. Develop *esprit de corps*. Keep at it.—The personal factor in success.—Our young men and young women must serve and sacrifice.—Power is from God.

From the standpoint of efficiency it is highly important that the correct conception should lie back of all our church organization. There are two views of a local church that may be held. The common view is that it is a group of unrelated and largely independent units, no one connected in any vital way with the other, each pursuing its work with an eye single to the advancement of its particular department, regardless of any effect it might have upon another part of the church organization. Such a conception seems almost the acme of inefficiency. Think for a moment of an army organized on such a plan. The truer view is expressed in the term "organism." The church has a corporate life, the

life of the Spirit, which flows through every part and relates every single organization to the whole in a perfect unity. No one part stands alone. What affects one part touches another part in helpfulness or harm. An organism is a *living* thing. Its law is cooperation. The human body is a perfect illustration of an organism. It has many parts, but, as Paul tells the Corinthian church, "they are many members, but one body; . . . and whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Cor. 12. 20, 26).

A practical illustration of this difference in conception may be useful. Here, for instance, is a flourishing organized adult Bible class of men. Their strength makes them feel independent. In their plans they do not consider their relation to the main school or to the church at large. They are planning and working with a view solely to their own problems. Such a narrow view on the part of any single organization tends to division rather than unity, to selfishness rather than cooperation. The church must serve the class, and the class must serve the church.

The Place of Organization. There are some who pay little attention to organization, saying that what we need is the Spirit of God, that we are too much concerned about organizing and promoting, with almost a frenzied mania for machinery. Organization may be overdone, but let us not forget that rightful organizations are channels of the Spirit, means through which the power of God expresses itself. We cannot think of God's will being done without

agents and agencies. "I am the vine, ye are the branches," and the fruit grows on the *branches.*

But nothing is easier than to confuse organization with that which organization is supposed to accomplish. It is the result that must always be kept in mind. Many churches have endless machinery, always running; but when the product of all this machinery is sought it is sadly lacking. The object of a church is not to keep as many wheels turning as possible nor to put everybody to work just to see them work. The object is, rather, through their work to bring about definite results in character and material good. The development of unselfishness and the spirit of cooperation, the inculcation of the spirit of faithfulness—in short, cultivation of Christian personality—this is the standard and test of every organization in the church.

Perhaps you have seen at a county fair a demonstration of farming implements and machinery. The application of the gasoline engine to farming has multiplied such improved means of agriculture. You stand by and watch the men demonstrate. The wheels go round, the belts keep turning, the whistle blows, the agent talks incessantly of its many virtues, but the machine doesn't get anywhere. *It stands still.* Come back the next day, and all the machinery is still running perfectly, but it hasn't moved a foot. We have all seen churches just like that—a multiplicity of organizations, all oiled and adjusted and revolving endlessly, but not getting anywhere—machinery for the sake of machinery, with no measurable product to show for the energy and money expended. Every organization is a means

to an end, and that end is the development of Christ-like characters.

The Efficiency Test in the Church. The church is grappling with the biggest task ever presented to the thought of man. It includes not only salvation in another world after death, but the whole social, moral, and religious regeneration of society. Its success or failure reaches to the very roots of our entire world structure. The old policy of conservatism and inertia will no longer meet the need. If the church is to continue to hold the loyalty of men it must come forward with a program that calls into play its magnificent resources and stops at no goal short of the subjugation of all realms of life to the authority of Jesus Christ. One vigorous leader has issued the call in these stirring words:[1] "What is needed to change defeat into victory is a real battle in the name of Christ. It is the militant church which attracts red-blooded men and makes leaders. And first there must be a plan of battle. An army cannot be rallied without something to rally to. A campaign must be laid out. A new program must be constructed for the church. It must offer something that is vital and worth doing. It is not Christianity but the church which has ceased to attract. No new gospel is needed, but a gospel adapted to present conditions. It will preach the same old gospel, but must have a new program for carrying it into the life of the city. Men are as loyal to Christ as they ever were, but they cannot be rallied to the church without a plan of battle that gives

[1] The Reconstruction of the Church, Strayer, pages 158, 159.

promise of victory. Such a plan of battle would result in something like the old crusades."

As has been suggested in Chapter II, each local church should have presented to the whole congregation for approval every year a carefully prepared program of its plans of activity. Of course this program will differ for different churches, therefore in each case it must be based upon a careful survey of the field in which the church is working and the resources of the church at work in the field.

After all, what is an efficient church? Should we apply the term to so spiritual a thing as a church? Success is not always efficiency. A church may be prosperous without much effort. If members are added—particularly substantial members—if the congregations are good, if all bills are paid, it is counted successful. It may, however, be far from efficient. An efficient church is one that gets the utmost results with its available resources of time and money, by the scientific study of the goals to be attained and the equipment and personnel at its disposal.[1] It involves three factors: (1) intelligent understanding of the goals to be attained in your community; (2) reasonable estimate of resources in workers, money, and equipment; (3) the largest possible results in proportion to energy and time invested. Modern business is organized on these principles, and the church cannot escape the efficiency test if it is to survive and serve in our modern civilization.

Unifying the Forces at Work. It is not possible within the scope of this volume to discuss the details

[1] See A Modern Church Program, McGarrah.

of each organization that makes up the life of a local church. Bearing in mind that the number and character of these differ in varying conditions confronting different churches, let us turn our attention to a suggestion as to the process by which all these forces within each church may be unified. In unity there is strength. In the organic idea of a church each part exists for the whole, and the whole for each part. This is often not true in church life, and much energy is dissipated because it is not properly related to other forces at work.

This unification we propose to bring about by what shall be called a church council, which is an unofficial body composed of one or more representatives chosen by the pastor from each working department of the church. It may be contended that this is simply multiplying organizations, but such is not the case. Let us take an analogy from the Government of the United States. Each department has its own separate organization, directed by a secretary who is responsible for the organization and direction of his particular function of government. But the President has his Cabinet, composed of these various heads. Frequent meetings of this Cabinet are held so that policies may not conflict, but that the Government of the United States may act as a unit. Furthermore, when each department chief understands what every other chief is doing he can more intelligently direct his own department. Think for a moment of the chaotic confusion that would result if each department could direct its work without consulting the interests of other departments. Yet precisely this is being done in hundreds of

churches to-day. There is no unity of plan and action, and each organization is out for itself principally and for the church incidentally.

I said that the church council is an unofficial body because its creation is not a disciplinary requirement for the local congregation; nevertheless the creation of such a body is in no way contrary to the spirit of Methodism or its Discipline. The council is composed of the pastor, who presides, and of one or more representatives whom he selects from each organized department of the church. In different churches this list would vary, but in most churches some such a list of members as the following would be suggestive: chairman of the board of stewards, treasurer of the church, lay leader, superintendent of the Sunday school, superintendent of the adult department, superintendent of the Secondary Division, superintendent of the Elementary Division, presidents of the women's missionary societies, director of boys' work, president of the Epworth League; chairmen of the missionary, educational, social-service, and evangelism committees; chairman of the board of trustees. Others could be added or some dispensed with as the individual case demanded. In some cases it might be advisable to have these representatives elected by each group rather than appointed. The council should meet monthly and hear brief reports from most of the departments represented and discuss in a critical but constructive spirit the work of the various departments.

Consider now a few of the advantages that accrue from such a plan:

1. It introduces the spirit of democracy into the

local church. The church belongs to the people—not to the pastor—and the people ought to be consulted in its management.

2. It utilizes the experience of all the working forces—not a few only, as is so frequently true at present.

3. It brings the consolidated judgment of all the church to bear upon the problem of any one department.

4. It insures cooperation rather than conflict in the departmental life of the church.

5. On comprehensive issues, such as evangelism and missions, it enables the pastor to drive to a single point from every angle of the field.

It must be borne in mind that this council is not a legislative body at all. It should not, through committees or otherwise, attempt to carry out any plans. It must work through and magnify the separate departments. It is solely a deliberative and advisory group.

The question will arise, What relation does this council sustain to the official board? The difference in the composition of the two groups is apparent. Unfortunately, the official board has become largely a business-administration board. The business management of a modern church is becoming so complex a matter that it may be questioned whether this fact has not of necessity thrown upon the boards such large responsibilities that the business affairs of the church must occupy the chief place in their attention. We are facing facts, and those facts show that the average official board is not closely in touch with the details of the various units that

make up the local organization. There is no conflict here. The board is represented more numerously than any other group and to the discussion of its distinctive problems may bring, through its representatives on the council, the sentiment of the entire church. Similarly, upon a moment's reflection, this plan will be seen to interfere in no way with the work of either the church or quarterly conference. It is the principle that must be kept in mind. Changes in the functions of the quarterly and church conference may suggest modifications in the details of this plan which can be easily and wisely made by the local church.

Efficiency in Action. There is an old saying, "Plan your work, work your plan." Many have told us that what we needed was not so much a new plan as a new earnestness in carrying out any plan we have adopted. No matter how perfect the program may be, it will not succeed without intelligent and energetic work. In view of its stupendous enterprises the church needs a new baptism of enthusiasm. This work of world redemption through individuals and Christianized groups of individuals must be done; the church is called to do it. Let us bring to the accomplishment of this necessary and fundamental task some of the Master's faith and courage and unconquerable joy.

But you ask, How can this thing be done? A method of doing it is not nearly so important as a conviction that it can be done. Methods fail; only determination wins. There is little hope of big results from the man who studies simply schemes and plans; real success goes deeper than that—into

the question of resources and factors and needs. Outline your task, make an inventory of your resources, seek divine strength, and go after big business for the kingdom.

Only a few of the general lines of approach to the problem can be stated here. It is hoped they may be suggestive of many others to the thoughtful reader of this chapter.

1. Working a program is dependent on a common understanding among the people of the facts regarding the social and religious conditions of the community in which they live and the present contribution in effort and money being made by the church to improve these conditions. Nothing is more valuable than a church survey, followed by the charting of the results so that the congregation can face the facts.

2. Concentration on issues until an impression is driven home will avoid the scattering of efforts. You can hold attention only so long to one theme. Drive hard for results and then turn to another line. Thus, nothing grows stale to the workers, and important items of the program are given systematic and concentrated attention. This makes an impression where the hit-or-miss, no-plan way dissipates itself into vagueness and failure.

3. Studying the human nature of workers and trying to fit the task to the temperament and training of the individual are also very important. Not all persons can perform equally well the same task. To get the worker and his job together is the test of Christian strategy.

4. The group spirit must be stressed. Develop an

esprit de corps, a laudable church or class pride. See and talk about the good things and do not indulge in heedless criticism of your fellow workers. It simply discourages. Believe in folks; and when some fail, as is inevitable, keep on believing. It was Jesus' way.

5. Keep everlastingly at it. Here no flashy phenomenal results are likely to last. What grows slowly lasts longest. Plan for your church for the years, build every month, and keep on building even when discouraged. When disheartened over groups select some individuals and inspire them with your ideals. "Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

The Personal Factor. When the last word is said, it is the person that counts. Bigger than a system is the brain that conceived it. An army is simply a mass of individuals organized for a common end. The biggest element in efficiency is personality, and the secret of personality is Christ in the center of the personal will. The greatest efficiency expert the world has ever known said, "The love of Christ constraineth us." Paul was a statesman in the kingdom of God, but he was a bound servant of Jesus Christ. He was a statesman because he was a servant (see John 13. 3-5).

It will not be amiss, I trust, to lay upon the hearts and consciences of the young men and women who read these pages the serious call to a mighty conflict. You are in the church. It is your church. There is no time now to lament with pessimistic wailings the shortcomings of the days gone by. Our faces are to the future. If the church rises to its

magnificent calling and meets the challenge of this new day, it will be done only because the youth now in our churches consecrates itself anew to the holy task of making this world the dwelling place of God and all the kingdoms of earth the kingdom of our Christ. This can never be done until more of our choicest young men and women shall look upon a place of leadership in a local church as a post of honor. They must direct their energies so as not to scatter them in so many different directions, thus making ineffectual their leadership in any. In the last analysis the world must be saved community by community, group by group, individual by individual. Your church will be used of God to bless the world as you and your fellow workers place yourselves in the front line of service and sacrifice and let Christ lead you against the entrenched foes that oppose Jesus and his cause. "Give diligence *to present thyself* approved unto God."

And lastly, shall we not remember always that our spiritual resources are our greatest reliance? "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts." Prayer must be harnessed to our mired wagons; faith must carry us over the rough places. We cannot do the work of the Lord without the Lord's power. That power is limitless, and all the resources of heaven are at our command. Shall we then attempt this wonderful opportunity in our own human strength? Never. It is God's task, and his might is pledged to our help. We must not dare to think of failure. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Thought Questions

1. What is the difference between an organism and an inanimate object?
2. What is the real end of an organized Bible class?
3. When is a church efficient?
4. To your mind, what elements of efficiency and inefficiency do you see in your local church?
5. What is the best way to build up a church?
6. Am I doing the best work for God that I am capable of doing?

CHAPTER VIII

EFFICIENCY THROUGH GENERAL ORGANIZATION

No church can live to itself.—Methodism essentially connectional.—General boards of our churches.—How can mutual service between boards and local churches be arranged?—Command resources of boards for education of membership.—Pray for general interests of church.—Secure contributions from large givers. Raise apportionment gladly.—The history of a dollar.

No Christian can live unto himself. He is a member of a great brotherhood, and this larger fellowship strengthens his individual Christian experience. The same is true of the local church. It cannot be a separate institution living for its own ends and interests without reference to the other members of the great brotherhood which exists around it. It shares the common life of that larger body we call the Christian Church. As the rising tide of the ocean fills every inlet and creek, so does the floodtide of the Spirit flow into each small congregation from the presence of God in power in his church. This organic relationship is felt even more distinctly within the narrower bounds of the denomination. Bound together by the ties of a common history and inspired by an accepted approach in thought to Christian fundamentals, the separate churches should feel the strengthening touch of their fellow workers in other fields.

Methodism is essentially connectional. When John Wesley said "The world is my parish" he broke down more barriers than those which separate races; he planted a church whose limits should be the limits of the world, but whose oneness should be suggested by the fact that no matter how large it could grow it would be simply a world-wide "parish." There was no idea in his mind of scattered and unrelated units. He kept his own hand upon the church to consolidate and connectionalize it, and his prayer reechoed that of his Lord who desired that "they may all be one."

There are many denominations in which the connectional idea is not as strong as it is in Methodism. We regard it as a vital part of our ecclesiastical life. All the scattered and varied congregational groups are in reality parts of one splendid unity called Methodism. Now and then a congregation forgets its larger relationship and tries to exist for its own ends, but soon the need for the "strength of the pack" drives it willingly back into the group. Note how we stress our connectional idea. When a young man joins the ministry of our church he does not join any local Conference, he is a member of the world-wide fellowship of Methodist preachers, liable for service anywhere; our bishops are bishops of the whole church; our great objectives, such as missions and education, are handled through connectional boards, whose relationships are church wide. Whenever Methodism loses its confidence in the power of connectionalism, it will be almost certain to enter upon a career of distintegration. "United we stand."

The General Boards of the Church.[1] The general boards of the church as constituted at the present time are the result of long processes of development, as the needs and functions of the church have become more and more clearly realized. The boards exist to serve the church. They are in reality the church working with organized and delegated responsibility for the good of the whole. Each of them is the creature of the church. Its responsible heads are elected by and its reports are made to the representatives of the church at large.

The question now arises: How may a local church serve and be served by these church-wide boards? It is folly for a congregation to overlook through indifference or neglect the great benefit that these agencies can render to them. And yet some churches seem to feel that independence from the service bonds of connectionalism is something to be sought after. Such congregations lose the fine momentum and enthusiasm that comes from sharing in a common life and a common task.

1. The first way in which these general boards can be used by the local church is to *command their resources for its own work of information.*—Each such department of church activity issues much literature bearing upon its work and needs. These are prepared for general reading among the membership, and the church which does not keep its people informed on the larger issues of Methodism will not have much success in promoting its local

[1] For a list of the boards of the Methodist Episcopal Church and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and statements concerning their functions, see pages 95–106. Members of training classes should study one of these statements as a part of the lesson based upon this chapter, choice of statement to be studied being governed by their church affiliation.

enterprises. Again, make use of the officers of these general boards who are servants of the whole church. They are glad to cooperate in the campaigns of your own church where time permits and are always ready to offer suggestions or refer you to sources of information that will uniformly be valuable.

The question is often asked as to why there is not more interest in the general causes and undertakings of the church. It is most frequently due to the lack of information on the part of the people. One of the most important tasks of these connectional boards is to keep the membership informed. They are helpless in this matter, however, without the hearty cooperation of the local group. Into every new member's hand ought to go some literature explaining the church-wide activities of Methodism, thus impressing the idea that our task is bigger than that of a single church in one community. Spread throughout the church the story of our world wide task and our triumphs in the name of Christ. We must connectionalize our interests.

2. *Prayer life is often ineffectual because its horizon is narrow.*—It too often happens that in caring for our own personal or local needs we have no prayer power to expend upon the greater tasks of the kingdom of God. What could be more valuable than to enlist in each church a prayer group which should pray for all those who labor for the general care of the whole church? The boards and their consecrated secretaries and helpers need to be remembered at the throne of grace and power. They can serve as they are upborne by the prayers of the church within which they labor. In our individual

prayer life and in public shall we not take in the wider circle of spiritual interests? It will help those who pray as well as those who are thus remembered.

3. Cooperating with representatives of the general boards in securing from wealthy individuals contributions for the advancement of the cause of Christ, *is another means of mutual service.* We have too little of this. Wealth is dangerous unless used for the glory of God. We have been slow to recognize its peril and warn against its unchristian use. In almost every church there is one or more members who should give to God large sums of money for the spread of his cause. By presenting the claims of such world-wide causes as missions, church extension, or education the local church can set forward the goals for which these men labor. Large plans and enterprises enlist contributions that small local tasks fail to secure. Let us never forget that the interests of these boards are our interests and that we together with them labor for the great imperative principles which find organized expression through these channels. If they fail, we fail, and in the measure that they succeed, we succeed.

4. *Use the church boards as channels of benevolence.* Each year the sum needed to carry on and to advance the work of these departments of our church life is apportioned among the Conferences, and districts, and finally to the local church. Gladly should we make this sum which we are asked as a local church to give for benevolences and general work the minimum and not the maximum of our offering. A church that does not give to others dies just as does an individual. Let us not forget that

we sometimes wrongly apply one rule to the individual and another to the church. They live who give, liberally, gladly, loyally. The apportionment must ever be the minimum and it must be a free-will offering, as God has prospered us, giving to his Kingdom with the same generosity that he bestows his benefits upon us.

The question is sometimes raised as to the manner in which these funds for general activities are administered. Some misinformed people have spread abroad a notion that the expenses of administration consume nearly all the revenues turned in for church benevolences. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Investigation has proven that these interests are handled in the most economical way. No business house or insurance company in America can show a lower net cost of administration than our denominational boards. While administrative expenses vary somewhat, in general it may be said that from ninety-two to ninety-four cents out of every dollar goes directly to the work to which it is given, and out of the small balance all the costs of promotion, education, and business administration are paid. We can feel proud of the manner in which our boards meet the efficiency test in finance.

Let us use our imagination a few moments together. You contribute a dollar to a cause like that of missions. What becomes of it? You do not know except that "it goes for mission work somewhere." Well, let us see. Another person gives a dollar and many other dollars are joined to your dollar and the Board of Missions takes all these dollars and sends a preacher to the people of a village in the

Methodist Historical Society Southern California - Arizona Conference

interior of China where no messenger of the cross has ever been. A church is organized, Christian believers are trained and the entire community feels the touch of the Christ who has come to dwell in their midst. Your dollar is doing service in China and it is a more wonderful service because other dollars make possible an even larger offering to God. Thus through organization and cooperation in every department of the church we can do our biggest work for Christ.

THE GENERAL BOARDS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1. *The Board of Foreign Missions.*—The general supervision of all the work of the church in foreign lands is committed to this board. Its objects are religious, philanthropic, and educational, its work being designed to diffuse more generally the blessings of Christianity by the promotion and support of all phases of church work and missionary activity in foreign countries. The management and administrative affairs of the board are vested in a Board of Managers which consists of the bishops, who are *ex officio* members, together with thirty-two laymen and thirty-two ministers elected by the General Conference. The executive officers of the board are two, the corresponding secretaries, with coordinate power. They are employed exclusively in conducting the correspondence of the board, in furnishing the church with missionary intelligence through publications of various kinds, and in supervising the foreign missionary work of the church. The mission stations

of the board are world-wide, missionary work being carried on in thirty-four different countries in which the gospel is preached in more than one hundred different languages and dialects. The total number of missionaries working under the board in 1918 was 1,568. These were assisted by 13,110 native workers. The educational work of the board includes 12 colleges and universities, 36 theological and Bible schools, 94 high schools, and 2,853 elementary schools. There are also numerous hospitals and orphanages conducted under the auspices of the board. The missionary work of the church among women in foreign lands is carried on largely by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society which works in harmony with and under the supervision of the Board of Foreign Missions. The society seeks to engage and unite the efforts of the women of the church in sending missionaries to the women in foreign mission fields and in supporting them and native Christian teachers and Bible readers. Since its organization, up to 1918, the society had sent into the foreign field 967 missionaries.

2. *The Board of Home Missions and Church Extension.*—The prosecution of home missionary work in the United States and its possessions, not including the Philippine Islands, is committed to this board. The board is composed of twenty-eight laymen and twenty-seven ministers, elected by the General Conference. The general executive officer of the board is the corresponding secretary. Associated with him in the active work of the board are superintendents of five departments, viz., the department of church extension; the department of

city work; the department of rural work; the department of frontier work; and the department of evangelism. The department of church extension seeks to meet the need for the erection of churches in new and unchurched communities, to assist in the building of churches and parsonages where assistance is most needed, and by counsel and providing plans to help churches to build structures adapted to their requirements. The department of city work seeks to further in every practicable way the organized religious and social work of Methodism in large cities. It aids in making surveys with special reference to the religious conditions of foreign-speaking peoples and to changing the location and adapting the work of churches to the needs of congested districts. It also aids in the organization and development of adequate religious centers in the hearts of great cities. The department of rural work encourages the organization of rural churches in needy places, makes surveys in rural church fields, and cooperates with all the allies of the church in improving the economic, social, educational, and religious life of the people in rural sections. The department of frontier work studies the conditions and prospects of the newer sections of the country, encourages the organization of new churches where desirable, and recommends appropriations to missionaries where missionary aid is necessary. The department of evangelism exists to promote aggressive evangelism throughout the home field. The Woman's Home Missionary Society is also active and effective in missionary work among neglected and religiously needy populations in the home field.

3. *The Freedmen's Aid Society.*—The work of this society is the establishment and maintenance of institutions for Christian education among the colored people in the United States. It has twenty-one schools under its care. In a little over half a century more than 200,000 young men and women have been educated in these schools and have been sent out as ministers, physicians, teachers, Sunday-school teachers, and Christian lay workers among the ten million negroes of the United States.

4. *The Board of Education.*—The object of this board is to serve as the officially authorized agency of the church in behalf of ministerial and general education in order to diffuse the blessings of Christian education throughout the United States. It seeks to promote both general and theological education throughout the church by collecting and publishing statistics, by furnishing plans for educational buildings, by giving counsel with regard to the location and organization of institutions, by exercising an advisory relation to the business and educational management of all the schools and colleges of the church, and by devising ways and means for their financial aid. Its management is vested in a board of trustees, consisting of thirty-six members, one-half of whom are laymen, and all of whom are elected by the General Conference. The chief executive officer of the board is the corresponding secretary.

5. *The Board of Sunday Schools.*—The general oversight of all the Sunday-school interests of the church is committed to the Board of Sunday Schools. The board is composed of the corresponding secre-

tary, and the Editor of Sunday School Publications, three bishops, and twenty-four ministers and laymen. The board founds Sunday schools in needy neighborhoods; contributes to the support of Sunday schools requiring assistance; educates the church in all phases of Sunday-school work, constantly endeavoring to raise ideals and improve methods; determines the Sunday-school curriculum, including the courses for teacher training; and, in general, seeks to give impulse and direction to the study of the Bible in the church. The board also supports Sunday-school work in the foreign field. It makes grants of money for the preparation and purchase of Sunday-school literature and supplies for the various fields, and supports missionaries who devote all of their time and effort to the development of the Sunday-school work of their respective fields. It has missionaries in Norway, Sweden, Germany, India, China, Korea, Japan, the Philippine Islands, and Africa. The work of the board is carried on under the following departments: Adult, Elementary, Young People's, Extension, Finance, Foreign, Institute, Missionary Education, and Teacher Training.

6. *The Board of Conference Claimants.*—This board is charged with responsibility for building up and administering a connectional permanent fund in order to increase the revenues for the benefit of the Conference claimants, the retired ministers of the church, and widows and dependent orphans of deceased ministers.

7. *The Epworth League.*—The League is an organization of the young people of the church for the

purpose of promoting intelligent and vital piety among young people, and training them in works of mercy and help. The executive officer of the League is the General Secretary, elected by the General Conference. Its management is vested in a board of control. The League conducts classes in the local chapters in Bible study, missions, Christian stewardship, social service, temperance reform, and personal evangelism. The general organization maintains a series of annual training institutes, held in strategic centers for one week each year. In 1918 forty of these summer institutes were held. The organ of the League is the Epworth Herald, a weekly of large circulation.

8. *The Board of Temperance, Prohibition, and Public Morals.*—The object of this board is to make more effectual the efforts of the church to create public sentiment in the matter of temperance, to promote voluntary total abstinence from all intoxicants and narcotics and to secure the enactment of statutory and constitutional laws prohibiting the traffic in alcoholic liquors. The executive officer of the board is a general secretary, elected quadrennially by the board of managers.

9. *The General Deaconess Board.*—This is a board of twenty-one persons, three of whom are bishops, which exists for the promotion and general supervision of deaconess work throughout the church. The board exercises a general supervision over deaconess institutions, promotes the interest of preachers and laymen in the work, and seeks to enlist and supervise trained women in community service, work among immigrants, and the direction of religious

education. The executive officer of the board is a corresponding secretary, elected quadrennially by the board.

10. *The Commission on Finance.*—This consists of three bishops, six ministers, and six laymen elected by the General Conference, and the corresponding secretaries and assistant corresponding secretaries of the benevolent boards. Its purpose is to advise and cooperate with the various benevolent boards in promoting the unity and efficiency of their financial plans, and to inaugurate and conduct campaigns for the promotion of the financial interests of the several boards. It is also charged with the work of introducing the disciplinary financial plan into all the churches as rapidly as possible. The commission has a General Secretary and carries on its work through three departments, the field department, the apportionment department, and the stewardship department.

11. *The Methodist Book Concern.*—This organization comprises the publishing interests of the church and consists of the publishing houses located in New York city and in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the depositories connected therewith, together with the books, periodicals, and publications of the church, and the property, equipment, and appliances for their production and distribution. The Book Concern was established and is maintained for the promotion of Christian education; the dissemination of moral and religious literature; and the spread of Christianity by the publication, sale, and distribution of such literature. The net profits of the business are applied for the benefit of the supernumerary and retired min-

isters of the church. The general supervision and direction of the publishing interests are committed to the Book Committee consisting of twenty-five members, ministers and laymen. The administrative officers of the Book Concern are the Publishing Agents, three in number, elected by the General Conference to regulate the production and distribution of the publications and to conduct the affairs of the Book Concern. The Book Committee elects quadrennially a Book Editor who has editorial supervision of all manuscripts and printed matter intended for publication in book form. The editors of the various periodicals of the church, also the Editor of Sunday School Literature, are elected by the General Conference. The Editor of Sunday School Publications prepares and edits all books and literature included in the Sunday school curriculum, and all other required Sunday school publications. Associated with him in his work are associate editors responsible for the work of the following departments: teachers' publications, adult publications, secondary publications, elementary publications, story papers, literature for the foreign field.

THE GENERAL BOARDS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH

1. *The Board of Missions.*—The missionary activities of the church are committed to this board for general oversight. It is composed of the secretaries, the bishops, and thirty managers, ten of whom are preachers, ten laymen, and ten women, and is elected quadrennially by the General Conference. The work

of the board includes the cultivation of a missionary conscience, the spread of missionary intelligence and the general direction of all the missionary enterprises of the church. It annually publishes a great deal of missionary literature, it disburses the funds raised throughout the church for missions and oversees the establishment of new mission stations. At present there are mission stations in the following foreign lands: China, Japan, Korea, Brazil, Mexico, Cuba, and Africa. Under the Home Mission division of the board's work missions are carried on in this country among Italians, Mexicans, Japanese, and other foreign-born people. This board also has general supervision over the Conference boards of missions which are concerned with the oversight of mission territory in the bounds of the Annual Conferences. The women have developed a wonderfully strong work side by side with the parent board and under a new reorganization the closest cooperation exists between their distinctive work and that of the church at large. The following secretaries conduct the missionary work of the church: A general secretary, two secretaries for the Department of Foreign Missions, two secretaries for the Department of Home Missions, two educational secretaries (one of these secretaries in each instance is a woman), a general secretary for the Laymen's Movement and an editing manager of the "Missionary Voice," the monthly periodical of the board.

2. *The Board of Education.*—The educational work of the church is under the direction of this board consisting of twenty-one members elected quadrennially by the General Conference. Three

bishops and the secretary of education must be members of the board, and as many as ten of the other members may be laymen. The work of the board is largely that of the general stimulation of Christian education among our people and the strengthening of Christian institutions of learning. This includes the classification of schools according to their academic standing and the insistence upon the proper educational standards in all church schools. The board has always shown interest in increasing the endowment and equipment of our church institutions. Another feature of its work concerns itself with the building up of a ministry for the church. This it does by laying upon the conscience of its membership the demands of the Christian ministry as a life calling. This work is also furthered by the conduct of correspondence courses for young preachers entering the itinerancy who are required to pass examinations upon certain prescribed books.

3. *The Board of Church Extension.*—This board is composed of the secretary and twenty managers and the bishops. The board is constituted quadrennially by the General Conference. The main feature of its work is in stimulating the enterprises of church building throughout the connection. This it does by lending funds to churches for the work of building houses of worship and parsonages. A truly wonderful record has been made in this important phase of church development so closely inwrought with the development of Methodism.

4. *The Sunday School Board.*—The important work of the Sunday school is intrusted to a board composed of one bishop, twelve preachers, and twelve

laymen and of the Sunday School editor and general secretary. This board, exercising general oversight in the field of religious education, is concerned with the development of Sunday schools in all of the churches of the connection. Through field secretaries and specialists who travel over the church in the interest of developing efficient schools the standards are being steadily raised throughout the church. A large part of the activity of the board is concerned with the editing of Sunday school literature for the use of our schools. This literature is varied in its character and makes its appeal to all grades of development. The working force of the board consists of the Sunday School editor and general secretary, the assistant editor, the corresponding secretary, the superintendents of Teacher Training, the superintendents of the Departments of Elementary, of Intermediate-Senior, of Young People's and Adult work, of Missionary Education, and of the Home.

5. *The Epworth League Board.*—This board is composed of one bishop, the general secretary, and five preachers and five laymen. To it is committed the task of developing the young people's work of the church through the organization of Epworth Leagues. In the list of such organizations we find Junior League, Intermediate League, Senior League, and Knights of Ezelah (an organization for boys), and Girls of Epworth, a corresponding organization for girls. The board publishes, under the editorship of its general secretary, the "Epworth Era" a monthly periodical for the Leagues of the church. The work also includes the supervision of summer conferences and assemblies of young people.

6. *The Publishing Interests.*—The publishing interests of the church are under the general direction of a Book Committee composed of six clerical and seven lay members. Their duties include the spreading of good literature throughout the church and the general management of all of the publishing work of the church and the supervision of the three publishing houses, the main house at Nashville, Tennessee, and the two branches at Dallas, Texas, and Richmond, Virginia.

7. *Board of Finance.*—This board is composed of a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, and fifteen managers, including three bishops, six preachers, and six laymen. The secretary is the executive officer of the board and has charge of its work. The headquarters of the board are in Saint Louis, Missouri. Its functions are to raise and distribute funds for distribution among the superannuated preachers and their widows. Authority has been given for levying upon each Annual Conference an assessment of not less than one per cent of the amount paid by that Conference for ministerial support. This board further examines into the claims for such financial relief and seeks to further in every way the interest of the preachers who have been worn out in service of Methodism.

Thought Questions

1. What is meant by the "connectional idea" in Methodism?

2. Why could not a church be just as strong if it had no connections outside the community in which it is located?

3. Name and tell something of the work of each of the general boards of your church.

4. What necessity brought about the creation of these boards?

5. What service can they render to the local church?

6. What proportion of a dollar that is contributed to missions reaches the field of need?

CHAPTER IX

THE LOCAL CHURCH IN WORLD-WIDE ENTERPRISE

The world growing smaller.—Christianity a universal religion.—Our idea of God the basis of our missionary obligation: (1) Leadership in the local church. Missionary Committee. (2) Instruction in Missions. In the Sunday school. Among the children. Among adults. The missionary institute. (3) Giving to Missions. Our ideal in giving. Some instances of splendid giving. Specials. As much for others as for ourselves. (4) Recruiting for missions. Responsibility upon local church. (5) Prayer. Tragedy of working without power of prayer.—The world vision of the local church.

The world is becoming exceedingly small. The vast network of railroads, telegraph, telephone, and cable lines furnish the means by which the interests of one part of the world become the concern of all mankind. A century ago an uprising in China was quelled before we ever learned of its existence. To-day we read in our morning paper of what went on across the globe twelve hours before. Our stock markets reflect the latest happenings in all the centers of the world. The World War has completed the destruction of racial barriers and impresses forever upon us that no nation or people is independent of its neighbors. We are looking toward the real *family* of nations.

What relation does this growing sense of world

unity have to the cause of Christ? We shall bear in mind, first of all, that Christianity has always preached a gospel tending to break down racial and national barriers and unite men in a higher and more spiritual unity. Jesus overstepped the petty limitations of his day and Paul openly declared that "there can be neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, . . . for ye are all one *man* in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3. 28).

Furthermore, Christianity is a universal religion. Jesus is no Jewish preacher, but a World Redeemer. His humanity finds an answering chord in every human breast. Among the wilds of Africa the native chief, when touched by the grace of God, sees in Jesus the perfection of his ideal of man. The modern business and professional man in the centers of civilization acknowledges him as the Perfect Man. His plan of salvation, sealed by his sacrificial death, is world-wide in its scope and availability. The church is missionary by the very terms of its existence and environment. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3. 16).

Hence every Christian and every church becomes an agent and exponent of a gospel which knows no boundaries in intensive reach, in latitude, or in time. Our business is nothing short of seeing that the gospel "permeates the whole personality of the last man in the most remote section of the world." The Christian revelation of God as Father furnishes the ultimate conception of the Deity beyond which we cannot think. It is not that our civilization is better, nor that we are commanded to go, or urged by our boards and secretaries. We go because God has

revealed himself to us as the Father God, and multitudes who know him not as Father and Saviour perish in ignorance and superstition. It is the spirit of *noblesse oblige*. We cannot hoard the truth without losing it.

This spirit of self-sacrifice, of living for others, must dominate every strong church. Our life is in giving. We need nothing more than to realize that the church is a *missionary* organization. It exists not for itself but for the community and the world. Its life can be saved only as it loses it in sacrificial service.

Leadership. In former years the pastor alone bore the burden of the entire missionary enterprise in the local church. He preached and prayed and solicited and pleaded with his people. But better days are with us. He has strong helpers to-day in the church lay leader, the women's societies, the Epworth League, the Sunday school, the organized classes, and other special agencies. Thus the question of leadership shifts to one of organization and direction of forces already interested and probably at work. Representatives from each group having a definite missionary purpose should be organized into the church Missionary Committee with the pastor as director. All matters relative to the general missionary interest of the church should be brought before this committee, the work of the various agencies correlated and the missionary program and policy of the church adopted. This policy then becomes a part of the larger program of the entire church and is worked out by each of the several missionary forces of the local congregation.

The missionary policy of the local church must include emphasis upon the following four aspects of missionary propaganda: instruction, giving, recruiting workers, prayer.

Instruction. A church ignorant of the facts of missions can never be on fire for world evangelization. Information comes before inspiration. Too often we have damaged our cause by high-pressure methods of raising money when we were indifferent to the slower and more painstaking educational process which should have preceded it. Now the facts are available and are thrillingly interesting. When our people know they will give. Let us keep persistently working at the task of enlightening all the members about the wonderful triumphs of the cross in foreign and home lands.

1. *Missionary instruction in the Sunday school.*— Among the important elements here are: A superintendent with missions on his heart and willing to get it into his head. A strong missionary committee under whose general supervision all the missionary life of the school shall come. This committee will have many and varied duties and must adapt its program to meet the character and needs of the school in which it works. In many places it will provide once a month a program filled with missionary facts and inspiration for the whole school. Stress will be laid upon the opportunity offered in the monthly contribution of the pupils to the great cause of world redemption. In those schools which are departmentally organized the missionary appeal will be brought from time to time to each group in accordance with the lesson material offered for

the several grades. The wise use of charts and maps will appeal to the eye, and some such presentation of the facts should be constantly before the school.

In addition to these more general methods of creating the missionary spirit we must come to realize that the modern Sunday school looks upon the teaching of missions as one of its fundamental tasks. Graded missionary instruction is a part of every complete school curriculum, and the cultivation of the missionary conscience is regarded as one of the first tasks of the Sunday school. This work is done in the elementary grades through lesson material and platform suggestions. In the more advanced grades there are intensive courses of study, covering three months, in which a class turns aside for the definite consideration of themes relating to the world-wide relationships of the gospel.

It must not be inferred from the above that missionary education is simply a matter of knowing some facts and figures. "If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them." "Go ye." These are the militant words with which we are stirred by the Word of God from a mere armchair attitude to the missionary campaign. The Sunday school that is fulfilling its duty to-day must have a program that has some "go" in it. To cram the mind full of facts and flood the life with sympathy and open no opportunity to use and develop this initial impulse is the height of folly, if, indeed, it is not, religiously speaking, criminal. Let our Sunday schools learn their missionary programs not alone by studying about missions, but also by actually coming to grips with the missionary task itself.

In addition to the broad activities of the Sunday school in this field, we have two other agencies dealing with the youth of the church, both of which are doing valuable work in missionary education and activity, namely, the Epworth League (Senior and Junior) and the missionary societies managed by the women of the church. These agencies have been performing a marked service in the big task of making the heart of the church missionary.

2. *The adult life of the church.*—Some special forms of missionary instruction and activity have been used in stimulating the adult minds of the church. While they share in the program of the regular organization of the church they utilize certain additional ways of building up a missionary spirit. Prominent among these agencies, of course, must be preaching. While the missionary ideal should permeate all our pulpit utterances, the pastor should preach specifically on this theme at least four times a year, and in most cases oftener than this. Many pastors use twenty minutes at the opening of their monthly official board meetings for an informal study of such books as Doughty, "The Call of the World"; or Faunce, "The Social Aspects of Foreign Missions." A carefully selected and graded section in the Sunday school or public library on missions can be used to great advantage in enlightening and thrilling many who will read if properly directed by teachers and parents.

3. *The church missionary institute.*—Many churches have made successful use of the missionary institute. A program extending over three days, preferably Friday afternoon to Sunday night, is

planned. After good advertising and careful attention to details, this plan seldom fails to attract and interest the church membership. To concentrate thus upon one single interest until an impression is driven home is good psychology as well as sensible method. Sometimes the launching or the final collection of the missionary obligation of the church is associated with this institute.

Giving. The awakening of missionary intelligence and the stimulation of a missionary conscience will always lead to increase in the gifts to missions. Money is not the goal of the local missionary enterprise. It is simply the register of a heart interest and widening vision which is the end to be sought. There is much to encourage us to-day as we watch the rising scale of American Christianity's gifts to world-wide missions. American Methodism, including Canada, has been giving over $3,000,000 a year to carry the gospel to foreign lands. And yet we must confess with shame and humiliation that, compared to our immense wealth, we are still "robbing God" of his share in our material prosperity.

Our ideal must be a contribution from every member of the congregation. The world-wide interests of the Kingdom as they reach the local congregation must make their appeal to every believer in Jesus Christ. A Christian who does not believe in foreign missions is not worthy of the name. The fact that in our church the missionary offering of the congregation is determined by a committee outside the church and called an apportionment often serves to rob a congregation of spontaneity and real generosity in contributing. To pay their apportionment in full

is the goal of too many churches. The apportionment is the minimum and beyond that the church should go gladly. Let us see to it everywhere that we estimate our gifts to missions not according to a standard of human weakness, but in God's sight as he has favored and prospered us.

Funds for mission work have been greatly increased by the "missionary special" idea. In this case the church accepts a definite responsibility on the mission field. The Board of Missions assigns to a congregation a missionary, and the church becomes responsible for his support. They interchange letters, the prayers of the people strengthen the hands of the far-off messenger of the cross, while his personal touch through letters and furlough visits serves to supply the needed stimulus to the interest of the local congregation. The young people of First Church, Dallas, Texas, have for a number of years supported a Christian physician laboring in Korea at an annual expenditure of $1,200. A Sunday school in a community of five thousand in Tennessee cares for a single missionary at a cost of $700. In another city a splendid organized class of young men has undertaken the support of a deaconess in an adjoining factory district at a monthly figure of $25. Thus the story might be told endlessly of Christlike service rendered by cooperative giving for specific ends. The specials range in financial demands from scholarships in mission schools to the support of a married missionary. The beginning of real missionary life for many churches dates from the acceptance of definite responsibility for the cause of Christ.

What is, after all, to be our ideal for our churches in the matter of giving to missions? To spend as much for others as we do in maintaining our own life is certainly the lowest mark that can be called ideal. To match the pastor who looks after the home flock let there be another foreign pastor, supported out of the same budget, who seeks the "other sheep which are not of this fold." A church in Texas reported last year that it raised for all purposes $103,000, and of this amount only $19,000 was spent upon the maintenance of their own local church and the remaining $84,000 was spent on others. Such a record is a crown of glory for any congregation. Small wonder that this congregation excels in spiritual power. Nothing will so surely bring the mind and spirit of Christ into a congregation as to feel that they are really counting on the frontiers for him. Without this unselfish attitude throughout the congregation all really spiritual work languishes. Missions is the open road into the power of the Spirit for preacher and people. A missionary church is a living church.

Recruiting for Christ. Heroes of the cross fall every year in the front line where the fight is hardest. Their places must be filled by new recruits. The discovery and training of these young men and women constitutes one of the church's greatest obligations. And every pastor and Christian worker is a recruiting officer. We cannot trust to conventions and institutes and outside agencies alone to lead out into service our choicest young men and women. It is the business of the local church. The call of the non-Christian world, the call of ancient

peoples who know not God, the call of tottering continents that need the steadying power of the Christian motive, in short, the call of Jesus Christ to the youth of to-day, must be sounded in every local congregation. Many of our best young people are living lives of superficial and empty selfishness; others are secretly yearning for something worth while in life, and the church is offering them, oftentimes, a gospel of only negative righteousness. Let us not be afraid to sound the call of the heroic. Christianity is the gospel of heroism; it has grown strong and victorious through the sacrifices of its saints and martyrs. Our young people respond to-day as readily as ever in the past if the appeal is rightly made. They do not want easy lives, they do want big tasks.

It is to be hoped through Sunday schools, Epworth Leagues, and earnest words from the pulpit and in private that more sane and sympathetic vocational guidance will be given to our young people. Our young men and young women too often drift into their lifework without a careful and conscientious view of all the fields of service that lie out before them. There are so many ways to serve God and he needs workers so much that more of our choicest young leaders should be dedicating their lives to the kingdom of God. "Missions" is a broad term in our modern thought. It includes teaching in Christian schools and colleges, organizing kindergarten work, engaging in social service enterprises in our great cities, editing and spreading abroad Christian literature. In all these ways, in addition to the paramount opportunity of the pastor and the evangelist,

there is a loud and heart-breaking cry for consecrated workers. America must send her choicest youth to rebuild the waste places of this world and tell the story of the good news in Jesus Christ. It may be an embarrassing question, but Christ may be putting it to us to-day: "What contribution of life has this church made to the mission field?"

Prayer. Prayer is the spiritual dynamic that makes possible the foregoing program. Prayer is not a mere sentiment, or subjective exercise. *Prayer does things.* It is power. It unloosens energies and turns wheels. Read the life of any man who has released spiritual energies in the world and you will find the secret of his strength in the secret place of prayer. We cannot think of Henry Martyn or David Livingstone or General Gordon without thinking of their wonderful prayer life which so filled their lives with power. "It is a matter of history that men who have really prayed have also been men of unusual force of character."

Nothing can be more tragic than to see a church attempting to do its work without the presence of the Spirit of God in its midst. Spiritual progress can be made only according to spiritual laws. In our modern craze for results that can be marshaled and marketed we have forgotten that there is much of the best energy of a group of believers that can never be tabulated for the statistical tables. In every age the church must advance upon its knees. Without earnest intercessory prayer it can never enter fully into sympathy with Christ and his purpose for the world.

The stimulation of this prayer spirit for missions

in the congregation must not be left to chance. Prayer must be a definite part of the policy. To begin perhaps with a small prayer circle and widen it as the number multiplies, to pray by name for certain mission fields and workers, to intercede for God to raise up out of our own church candidates for the field, to pray intelligently for the world-wide kingdom in public prayer—these are only a few of the many ways in which we may develop this prayer spirit among our people.

The Local Church and Its World Vision. Saint Paul has a wonderfully beautiful strain running through his first letter to the Corinthian church. These early Christians felt their independence, their aloofness from the other churches of the faith. Paul tells them that as individuals and as a church they are members of the body of Christ. In this one Spirit all the churches were one. May we not feel to-day that our local congregation, whether large or small, in the center or on the edge of things, is not a group apart, but is an essential and vital part of that body of believers in which the Spirit of the universal Christ dwells? We are a part of the body of Christ; if we suffer, all suffer; and if any other member suffers, we suffer as well. Orient and Occident fuse under the white heat of God's love for all men. Thus the Christian community is one throughout the world. Its task is one—the overthrow of evil; its power is one—the ever-living Spirit; its goal is one—a redeemed humanity. Let us do our task, each in his separate field, with this breath of the universal and the eternal blowing ever upon us. The larger outlook will lend significance to the

smaller task. We are brothers one of another. Christ in you, the hope of the world's glory.

Thought Questions

1. Who made Christianity a universal religion?
2. Why is it better than the religions of the non-Christian world?
3. Is there any difference between foreign missions and home missions?
4. If you desired to place your life outside of America, where would you prefer to work?
5. What motives led young people whom you know that volunteered for missionary service to take such a step?
6. What can this church do to further the cause of missions?

CHAPTER X

HOUSING THE LOCAL CHURCH

Church buildings everywhere. Kind of building matters much.—Some essentials in building: good location, appropriate style of architecture, permanent material, modern and scientific arrangement.—Remodelling an old plant.—Some practical suggestions for building, financing the building, selecting the architect, deciding upon the plan, using business methods.—Two practical plans with elevations and floor plans.—The classic type.—The Gothic type.

Have you ever noticed as you drive through the country or ride on the train that there is one feature of the landscape that is seldom if ever missing, and that is the church building? Whether in the countryside or village or city there is the temple of God. Constructed of wood, brick, or stone, simple or elaborate, it is there, a silent and majestic witness to the fact that the people living in that community would have God dwell among them. The impulse to provide him with an altar, a house, a cathedral, has been an impulse with the race from the very beginning. In older times men built numerous and costly temples, such as the Parthenon, with no other idea than that they would provide a home for the Deity. To-day we build our churches not alone as dwelling places for the Most High, but also as places of gathering for social worship and training in

education and service. The largely increased place that religion occupies in the life of this modern day is evidenced by its determination to house adequately its growing religious life.

In no department of church life has greater activity been registered than in the work of church building. Many magnificent edifices have been built in expression of the religious zeal of our day, and the amount of money invested, all of it the free gift of the American people, is almost fabulous.

We must not think that it matters little what kind of church we have. It is often said that you can judge a community by the character of church buildings that you see on its streets. There is a fine ethical value in really good architecture. Bad architecture is an offense to all people who love harmony, and to perpetuate an unartistic conception by building it into stone or brick is little short of criminal. There has always been the closest relationship between art and religion. The artist has immortalized certain characters of the Bible by his paintings; we should be equally desirous of giving a religious setting to certain great artistic ideals. Some employ expert artists for their homes, but leave the church to the bungling hands of hasty contractors.

Some Essentials to Proper Housing. 1. The first essential is a good location. A church situation should be studied with the greatest possible care. More than one church has been doomed by the lack of foresight upon the part of its projectors. There are many factors to be considered when selecting a lot for a church. Such points as the center of the

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church population, the character of the neighborhood, the probable drift in population, the possible encroachment of business houses, means of travel to and from the church, must all be considered. A church should be located convenient to leading thoroughfares in the community. The main arteries through which the life of the section flows must lead to the church as well as to the business houses. The problem is somewhat different in a downtown church from that of a suburban or village church, but in any case ease of access must be a prime consideration. Do not tuck the church away on an unimportant side street because land is cheaper or some one has donated a lot. Select a corner lot wherever possible. The same reason that makes a lot expensive often makes it extremely valuable.

As to the size of the lot, it can be said that seldom does a church regret purchasing a piece of land too large for its immediate needs; on the other hand, it often laments the purchase of a lot far too small for its growing and expanding life. Let there be no suggestion of cramped and congested areas around the church building. Where a basement is demanded, the character of the soil must be closely examined.

2. The type of architecture is also important and will depend on the purposes for which the building is to be used, its location and setting, and, in some degree, the amount invested in the plant. All real architecture is expressive of ideas, and a church building, above all others, should be expressive of a permanent and worthful ideal. The reader will be familiar with the two outstanding types of architecture. The Gothic, with its spires pointing heaven-

ward and its straight, perpendicular lines joined in marvelous beauty, is suggestive of the aspirations that lead to "heavenly things" and centers attention upon worship and God. The Roman or classic type uses lateral lines and has more respect to utility and completeness of organization than the Gothic. It suggests the ideals of service and relationships to our fellow men.

3. The material of which the building is constructed must have proper consideration. This is often properly determined by local conditions and the amount of money available. No definite suggestions can be made other than that the material should represent honesty and genuineness. There should be no gaudy display or use of material which gives the appearance of being something which it is not. Such deception lacks in the genuineness that should always characterize religion. Wherever it is possible it is wise to build for permanence, to use those materials which are not injured by weather, and, whenever possible, to construct the church of fireproof materials. In such cases there should always be figured into the plans room for expansion when such becomes necessary.

4. More important than any of these is the proper arrangement of the building for the purposes of a modern church. No doubt our predecessors wrought well in their day, but the functions of a local church have changed so much during the last twenty-five years that our buildings of another generation are strangely inadequate to-day. The church of our fathers was built for the adult. There was no thought of a child's religious life in the mind of the

builders. The children were required to attend church, but no provision was made for their comfort. They believed in Sunday school, but not enough to realize that a one-room auditorium was no place in which to conduct a Sunday school any more than it was to teach a day school. But we have discovered the child and the youth in our communities, and now we build with their needs in view. This enlargement of the church plant is in response to the demand of the varied activities that now center in the church. In the place of being merely a house of worship on the Sabbath it is now an open church seven days in the week, affording a center for all the wholesome social and religious work of the community. To care for these new phases of its work many churches have built "parish houses" adjoining the main plant. Here are centered all the phases of the work relating to social life and many of the educational and community meetings. Such buildings have been abundantly useful in accomplishing the big new tasks of the church.

It is in connection with the Sunday school, however, that the largest demand has arisen for a new type of church building. Even within this one branch of church activity the development has been so rapid that it seems almost impossible to keep up with the march of ideas. Sunday-school buildings erected only ten years ago are in some cases poorly prepared to take care of a graded school. The departmental idea in the school has necessitated a readjustment of space that is almost revolutionary. Since the Sunday school is being put on a real educational basis, there is coming the general recogni-

tion that housing and equipment must correspond in correctness of principle and completeness of adaptation. There are some architects who have devoted a large experience to working out these details.

Remodeling the Old Plant. There are some churches that find it impossible to build an entirely new building. For one reason or another they must content themselves for some years with their old plant. The situation is not hopeless. Much can be done in remodeling the old building. Movable curtains can be placed in the auditorium, or, better than that, one side can be removed, and a Sunday-school addition added. Sometimes an addition for the elementary section of the school is added in the rear of the pulpit, with doors opening on either side into the main auditorium. Excavation may make possible a high and well-lighted basement. There are many ways of thus improving a bad architectural situation which will suggest themselves upon careful study.

The Practical Aspects of the Situation. There are certain phases of the housing proposition which need to be remembered when an enterprise of this character is contemplated. Conscientious attention to these matters would have saved congregations from many a church-building blunder:

1. *Financing the enterprise.*—Here often lies the crux of the whole matter. If the church is willing to invest a sum worth while in the plant, something creditable can be erected. But where the attitude is stingy and lacking in appreciation, little can be hoped for. A strong finance committee, each one

investing generously, and able to induce others to fall in line, must be appointed. These men must have faith in their project and in the cause of Christ for which they labor. They will not only seek to enlist large contributions but see to it that just as many people as possible contribute. Where the money goes, there will the heart go also.

2. *Selecting the architect.*—Here the most impartial judgment must be exercised. No person connected with the enterprise is of more vital importance to its success than the architect. He can literally make or mar the entire project. As a rule, do not become interested in an architect who has had little or no experience with modern church building, however good he may be in other lines. Inspect his work, talk with the committees with whom he has dealt in some of his recent structures, find out his disposition as well as his technical ability. Give him your suggestions freely and invite frank discussion of all details. Possibly not all you want can be had for the amount you are prepared to invest in the building, but the architect can be of great service in harmonizing the various details and constructing them into well-proportioned and architecturally correct lines. It is hardly needful to suggest that we must beware of bargain-counter architects, who do not affiliate with the best elements in the profession, but prefer to underbid their fellow architects and employ unfair means to land the contract. Surely, a church must not countenance such unprofessional conduct and must stand by the honest man and the integrity of the profession.

3. *Deciding upon the plan.*—Before a final plan

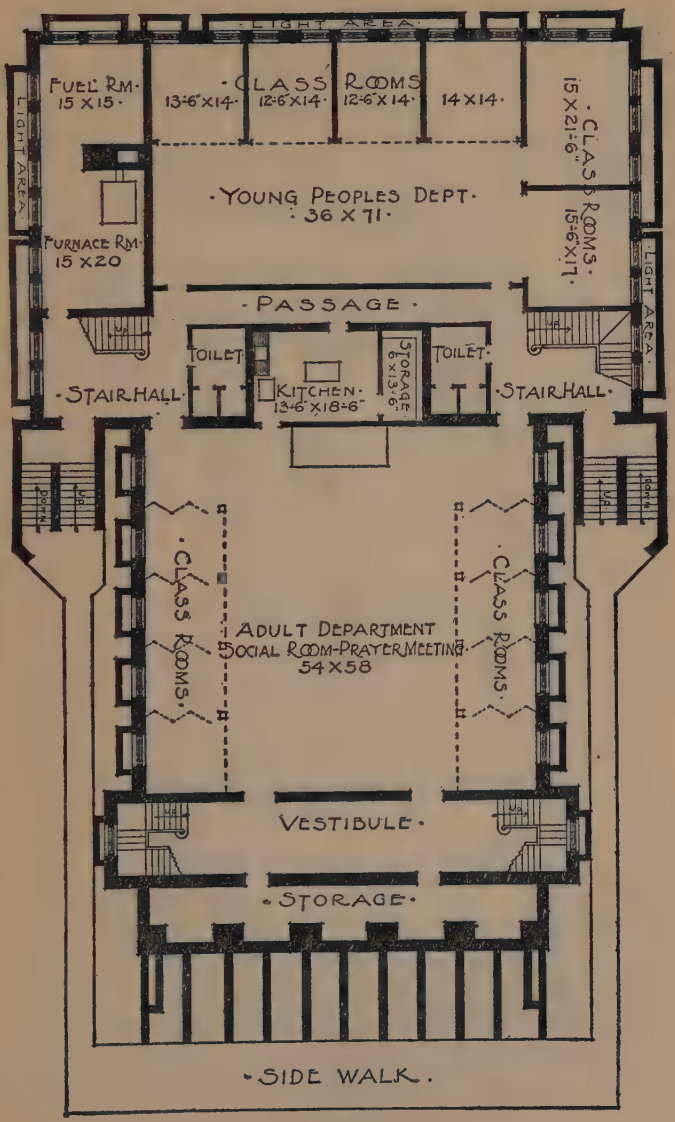
is worked out the most careful study should be made of every detail in connection with the entire plant. Take plenty of time. Haste is often the mother of regret. The detail of your plan will depend largely on your local needs. Every building must be built with the task of the particular local church in view. No secondhand plan is apt to be entirely satisfactory. A visit to other cities or towns and a careful study of plants now operating will be of inestimable value in helping to discover your own needs or to avoid blunders that others have made.

Before the plans are decided upon, the counsel of many of the members of the church should be sought, the needs of each department of the church life should be presented, and everyone should have opportunity to make any suggestion. These ideas will not always harmonize, but the committee and the architect will have no difficulty eliminating the impracticable ones.

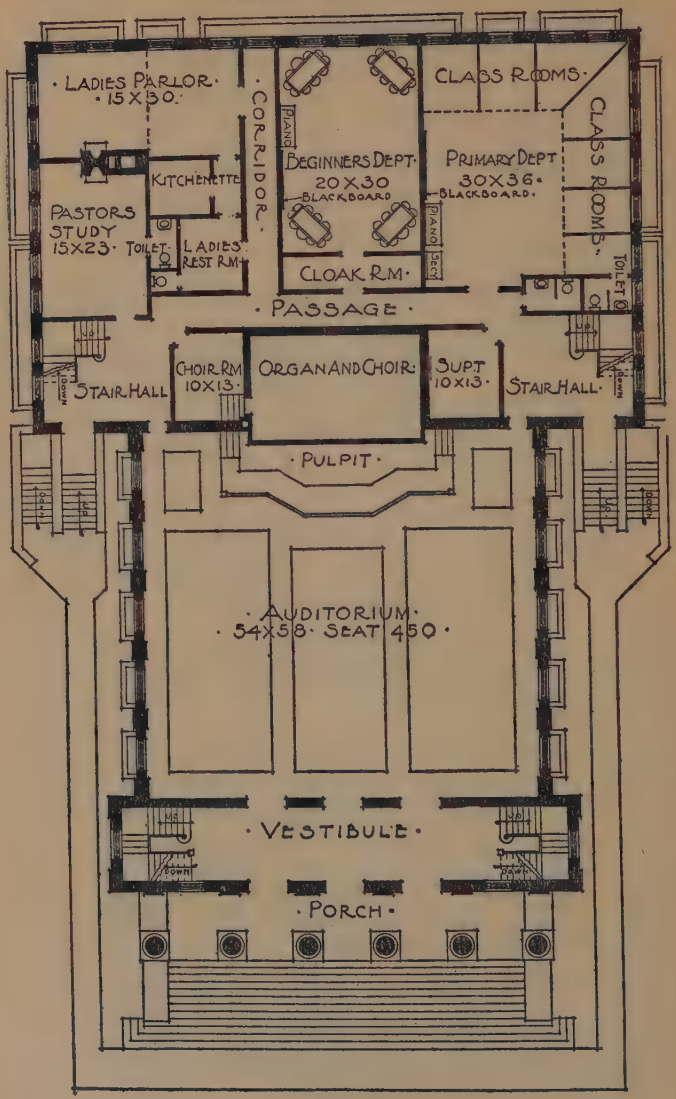
4. *Using business methods.*—It need hardly be said that the strictest business methods should be followed in all the details of the work. Contracts should be carefully inspected and fairly and rigidly adhered to. Financial arrangements must be conducted in a businesslike way, and every detail looked after with promptness and personal attention. All this takes time and energy, but its recompense is evident in the ease and success with which the entire project is carried through to a happy and successful conclusion.

Two Practical Plans. It will be manifestly impossible to give a full description of buildings in a book of this character. But it is certainly true that an

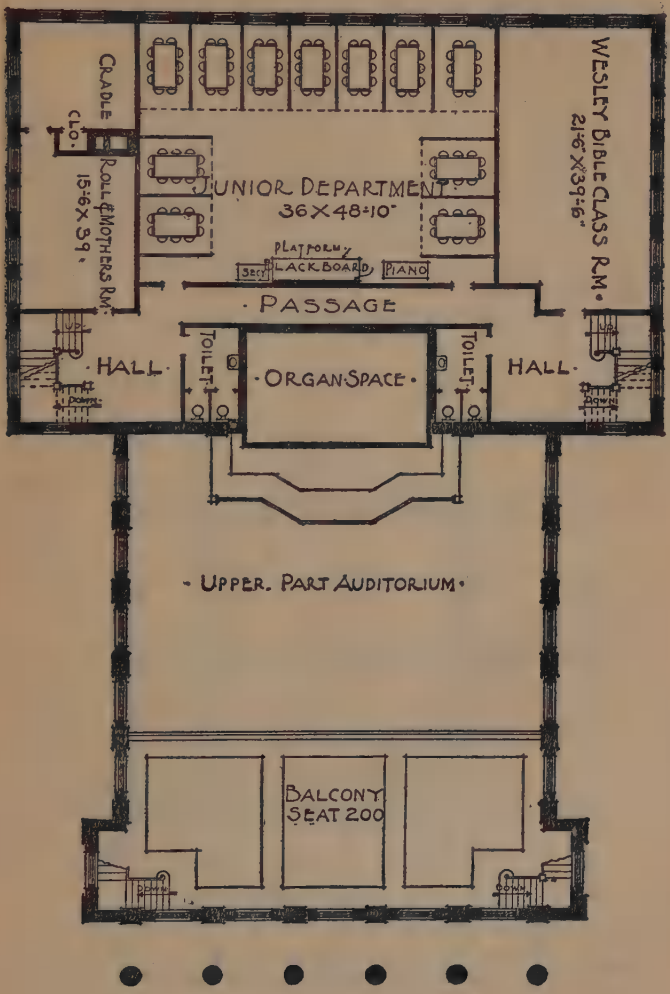
Plan I. Ground Floor



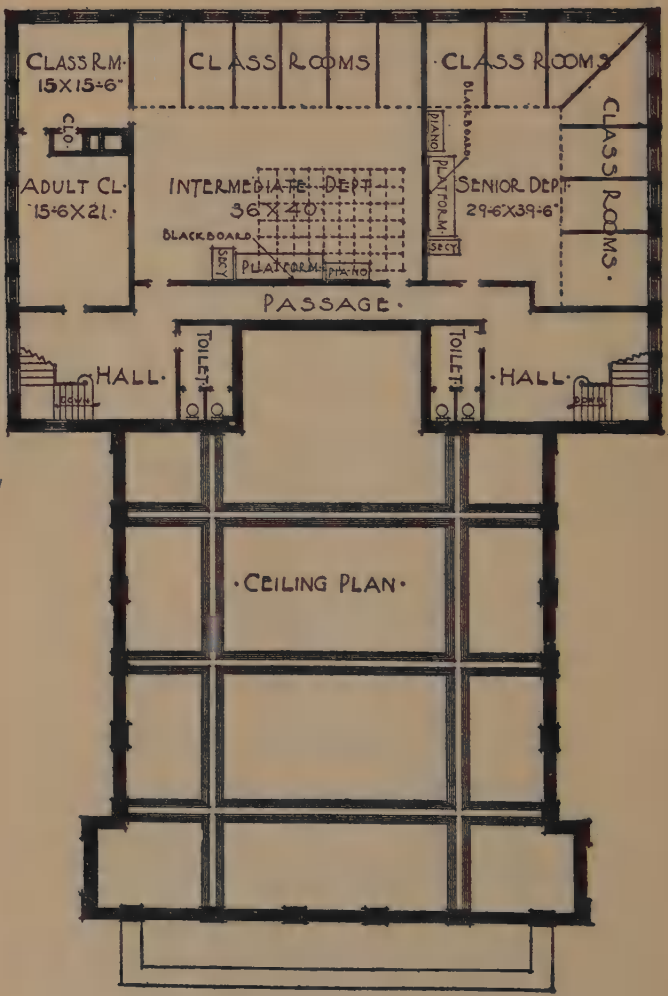
PLAN I. MAIN FLOOR



PLAN I. SECOND FLOOR



PLAN I. THIRD FLOOR



idea can be gained of the essential points in a modern church building from a few drawings in a more satisfactory way than by general descriptions.

Two plans are here given, the first of which is a sample plan sent out by the Board of Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Louisville, Kentucky. Full details in regard to this plan can be obtained by writing to the board.

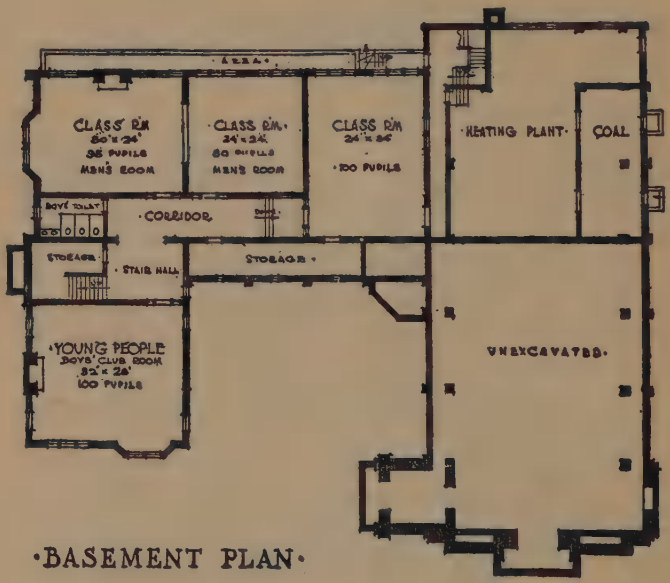
The second plan submitted is put out by the Bureau of Architecture of the Board of Sunday Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose office is in Chicago, Illinois. This plan is Gothic in general design, presents a simple plan of structure providing for the departmental idea, and gives ample space to young people's work and activities. One difference between the two plans can be seen in the fact that the first provides for classrooms within the department rooms, while the second plan makes no provision for separate classrooms, each class to meet around a table in the large departmental rooms.

It will be well for each reader of this book to study out some of the striking features of these plans, which will serve to impress upon the mind the outstanding features of a modern church building.

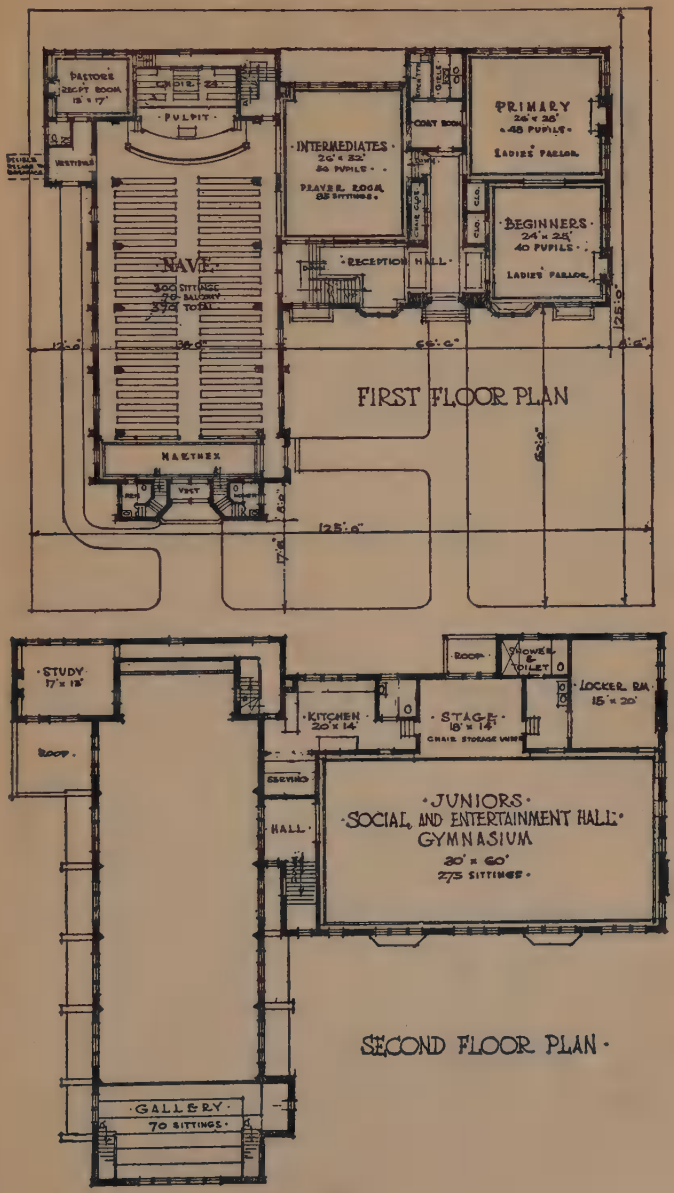
Thought Questions

1. Would you be willing to remain in a community that had no church buildings in it?
2. Of whom should we think primarily in building a church?
3. In what ways do you think your own church plant could be improved?

PLAN II. BASEMENT



BASEMENT PLAN


PASTOR'S RECPT ROOM 15' x 17'
PULPIT
VESTIBULE
NAVE
300 SITTINGS
70 BALCONY
370 TOTAL
NARTHEX
INTERMEDIATES
26' x 22'
34 PUPILS
PRAYER ROOM
85 SITTINGS
PRIMARY
26' x 26'
48 PUPILS
LADIES' PARLOR
BEGINNERS
24' x 25'
40 PUPILS
LADIES' PARLOR
RECEPTION HALL
CLOAK ROOM
CLOAK ROOM
CLO.
CLO.
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
125'-0"
125'-0"
STUDY
17' x 15'
ROOF
KITCHEN
20' x 14'
STAGE
18' x 14'
CHAIR STORAGE UNDER
ROOF
SHOWER & TOILET
LOCKER RM.
15' x 20'
ENTRANCE
HALL
JUNIORS
SOCIAL AND ENTERTAINMENT HALL
GYMNASIUM
30' x 60'
275 SITTINGS
GALLERY
70 SITTINGS
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

4. How can a church building express an ideal of service?

5. How many "outgrown" churches can you think of? Could you remedy the situation in any of them by remodeling?

6. Is a community's investment in a well-equipped church plant a good investment? Why?

CHAPTER XI

FINANCING THE LOCAL CHURCH

Jesus' attitude toward wealth.—His teaching regarding money.—The Bible teaching on giving: stewardship, the law of the tithe, an act of soul, liberality a Christian grace.—Fundamental principles in financial management: a church worthy of support, people must be educated in giving, spirit of democracy must prevail, real business methods needed, giving must develop character.—The new financial plan.—A sample budget.—Outline of a new financial plan for Methodists: Inform, train, pledge, weekly payments, separate budgets, monthly or quarterly remittances.—All in Spirit of Christ.

WEALTH may be a blessing or a curse. Consecrated to God and his service, capital becomes an agency of the kingdom second only to spiritual power. Jesus nowhere condemns rich people as such. He partook of the blessings that wealth occasionally provided for his comfort and entertainment. But he leaves no doubt in the minds of his hearers that money is a peril to its possessor, that its love is "a root of all kinds of evil." He explains by parable and precept how hard it is for a wealthy man to keep the love of money from blinding him to the higher interests of life. Consider in this respect the teaching of Jesus in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, in which Dives is lost because of his unsocial use of his possessions, and the story of the rich young ruler,

who clung with pathetic blindness to his money rather than venture out with Jesus on the highways of service.

The teaching of our Lord is even more positive. It rests upon the fundamental principle that man's primary interest is not material but spiritual. All the acquirements of modern life, accessories of civilization, are permissible if they add to the power of the ethical and spiritual life of man. If they imperil this primary purpose of the individual, they are bad, the agents of death rather than of life. In other words, money is a means to an end, not an end in itself. The end of life is to know God and serve him. Whatever promotes that end is of God; whatever defeats that end is of the evil one. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." It consists in the things that he is and yearns to be.

The Bible on Giving. What is the Bible teaching on the subject of giving? It consists in at least these four simple principles:

1. *All of our possessions are held in trust for God.*—We own nothing in fee simple. We are the trustees of our heavenly Father, from whom are all things. "Stewardship" is the first word in Christian giving.

2. *The Old Testament teaches the law of the tithe.*—Many Christians have insisted that it is obligatory upon us to-day. We should certainly follow the principle wrapped up in the ancient custom, even if we do not feel bound by the external details. A proportionate part of each man's income should be regularly set aside for God's work on the liberal

schedule involved in the familiar expression, "Not how much of my money shall I give to the Lord, but how much of the Lord's money shall I keep for myself?"

3. *Giving is an act of the soul and not a transaction of the bank book.*—God does not desire our money except as it is an expression of our love for his cause. When we know and love we give liberally, and when we are ignorant and indifferent we are miserly in our offerings. Gifts not given in the spirit of love bear no fruit in the personal life of the giver. The Lord loveth a *cheerful* giver. The original suggests the idea of "hilarity" in giving. Such giving is motived by love and pleases God.

4. *Liberality is one of the Christian graces.*—We are not to think that it matters slightly what is our attitude to money. That attitude largely determines our Christian growth in grace. We cannot bear the fruits of the Spirit and use our possessions selfishly. Paul exhorts the Corinthians, "As ye abound in everything, *in* faith, and utterance, and knowledge, . . . *see* that ye abound in this grace also" (2 Cor. 8. 7). Christian liberality belongs by the side of faith and knowledge in the apostle's mind.

Fundamental Principles in Financial Management. The details of the financial management of many local churches are as antiquated as a stagecoach would be on Broadway. If a modern business house handled its finances in as unbusinesslike manner, it would go into the hands of a receiver within a year. These are strong statements, but intimate knowledge of many churches, both large and small, leads me to believe them not far from the truth. Remember that

paying the preacher and meeting Conference apportionments in full are no sign of financial integrity. There are other questions, such as: How many in the congregation contribute? How does the financial work minister to the spiritual life of the church? How is the money raised? How much, according to God's standard, ought this church to pay? So we may advisedly look at some of the principles that must be observed in local church finances.

1. *There must be a church worthy of support.*—The average modern man looks upon his contribution as an investment, and he wants to know whether it is likely to be a good one before he makes it. Church people will contribute liberally to a going enterprise, but nobody likes to put money into a declining project. Some people seem to think the best way to get money is to make the appeal of church poverty and immediate need. Nothing is more deplorable. Men may toss a coin to a beggar, but they invest heavily only in healthy, self-respecting enterprises. The appeal for money should not be because "it's our church," "it's the Lord's work," "we need your support," etc. Let the church be made a community force for righteousness; let it do the work of the kingdom in its community; save the life that grows up and that swarms around it; and money will come in from men and women who will gladly help when they see the church proving itself worthy of support.

2. *Financial policies must be based upon the thorough education of people in the principles and objects of giving.*—We have too long depended on the emotional appeal, helped on by a few jokes that degrade the whole cause. Money raised thus may

meet a deficit, but it is like sending a train over the false work of a bridge: we can never feel safe until the permanent foundations of information and instruction are underneath our structures. Three fourths of our people know almost nothing of conditions in any of our great departments of church activities. How can they be expected to give blindly to causes they know only under the title of "benevolences"? Information is the basis of liberality.

3. *Financial methods must be democratic in spirit.*—Sometimes the spirit of our church life takes on the semblance of autocracy. The church is often financed by a few members who are rich. They do not take pains to interest people of limited means in making their small gifts; they pay no attention to training children; they give no report to the congregation as to how the money is spent. They would rather pay a little more as individuals than to go to the trouble to establish a democracy in the kingdom of giving. Christ's cause is supported to-day mainly by people of small incomes. With Jesus's immortal story of the widow's mite in mind, we must combat any tendency that serves to destroy the rights of all the people to share in the support and direction of the kingdom of him whom the common people heard gladly.

4. *Competent business methods must prevail in every local church.*—To handle the Lord's treasury in a loose and careless way is a sin. The church needs to learn that to excel in the efficient handling of Christian funds is a virtue that is to be sought by our finance committees and treasurers. I once heard a Methodist bishop say, "The Lord is not

honored by having any task done in his name in a shoddy manner." The details of modern church finances will be outlined later in this chapter.

5. *Giving must contribute to the growth of Christian character.*—There is giving that impoverishes the spirit of the giver. Sharing our possessions—really our own stored-up personality—is a Christian privilege. The bizarre and "bazaar" methods some churches have of raising money are not upbuilding in their nature. Let us be done with suppers and parties and turkey dinners and amateur performances to raise money for our Lord's cause. They dishonor our faith and react upon our Christian character in a most harmful way. Train up the children to give, insist upon everyone having a share, make the church not an object of charity but an agency of service, and preach everywhere the gospel of stewardship and privilege in the kingdom, and every gift will honor God and build up his church, and the kingdom will not lack money to advance its causes.

The New Financial Plan. The first step in this more efficient financial management is the preparation and adoption of the budget of the church, or the class, or whatever organization it may chance to be. A strong finance committee should be appointed whose duty it is to study the entire financial situation, discover sources of income, and gauge the expenditures in conformity thereto. Often it is best to look first at the needs of the field—that is, the necessary expenditures—and then seek means of securing sufficient revenue to meet the demands. For purposes of clearness a sample budget of an organ-

ized class in a Sunday school is given, suggesting a budget on the basis of one hundred dollars:

Sources of income		*Expenditures*	
Share of Sunday class collections	$35.00	On Sunday-school literature	$25.00
Class membership dues	30.00	For missions	20.00
Special offering for missions	20.00	For socials	20.00
Free-will contribution to budget	15.00	Advertising	10.00
		Social service	15.00
		Classroom	5.00
		Incidentals	5.00
Total	$100.00	Total	$100.00

The same general plan followed here can and should be followed by the local church and any of the organizations within the church itself. Each source of income should be made to yield its part of the budget, and great care should be exercised to keep expenditures within the specified amounts agreed upon in the beginning. The adoption of the budget pledges everyone to a personal responsibility in seeing that it is carried through in a businesslike manner. Upon the treasurer naturally falls the detailed management of the plan.

In a most excellent little book on efficiency in the local church, entitled The Way to Win, by Fred B. Fisher, there is given the clearest and most practicable outline of the new financial plan of Methodism I have seen. I have watched this plan work in actual experience with marked success. I am here following the general lines of his chapter on "How to Finance the Church." Those undertaking the reorganization of their finances are urged to purchase

this little book and follow its many valuable suggestions. The details of this plan are worked out here with the local church in mind. They are of interest to young people for the reasons that the principles apply to their organizations, and also because before long they will come into the larger financial leadership of their own churches.

The plan may be summarized under the following six heads:

1. *Preparatory information of the constituency.*—At least a full month must be allowed to educate the people in the needs of the causes to be presented. Charts should be prepared showing the past financial records of the congregation and the ideal for the present campaign. The pastor should preach on the general subject of giving and present the program of the church for the next year. Leaflets giving information on the benevolent causes can be had from the Boards and should be carefully but freely distributed. They should be sent or delivered into every home on the constituency roll.

2. *Training the canvassers.*—Canvassers should be selected with care from the busiest and best workers that can be found. Results may not be expected unless the best talent is enlisted in the enterprise. For at least a month the canvassers should have special attention from the pastor or leader of the campaign. Plan a supper some night at which the whole scheme is discussed. See that they are informed in regard to the program and benevolent appeals of the church. Weekly meetings should be held in which they should be coached as to the best methods of approach to members and the general

outline of the campaign. Urge and insist upon the necessity for prayer in connection with the entire undertaking.

3. *Securing the pledges.*—A list of all the constituency, children as well as adults, is made out on cards. On each card is the name of a prospective contributor and an estimated amount that the canvasser is to aim at in presenting the cause to the party. This estimate is made on the basis of past contributions and present needs. These cards are distributed to the solicitors, who always go two and two. They should seek to get a definite signed pledge from each person. The time of the canvass should be limited. In many churches it is done with no bad influences on a Sunday afternoon after the canvassers have been consecrated at an altar service in the morning. When anyone is away, let that name be promptly followed up and get all reports in within a week.

4. *Secure pledges on the weekly basis.*—This is scriptural and effective. It leads to generosity and insures prompt, regular, and full payments. Some who pay by check will willingly forego their own preference and use the weekly envelopes to encourage the smaller contributors.

5. *Separate budgets, pledges, and treasurers for current expenses and benevolences.*—The double envelope provided for this purpose is divided into two sections and can be torn apart easily. After the collection on Sunday each treasurer takes his part and keeps separate records of the contributions of the members. Specially prepared treasurer's books make the bookkeeping simple. The details of these

envelope systems will be gladly furnished you by your publishing houses, which handle these supplies.

6. *Monthly or quarterly remittances of benevolence money to the boards.*—These boards need the money to carry on their work, and the plan of waiting until the end of the year is unwise. The annual "tug" to collect the benevolences at the close of the Conference year is an unfortunate experience that is avoided by this plan of collecting and remitting regularly through the year.

This is a bare outline of the plan. It is not intricate or hard to work. It has no magic about it but it has the power that comes from sound underlying principles. It is educational in character, brings no hurtful reactions, builds up liberality, and increases revenue almost beyond belief. Let us remember a few practical points in connection with this plan:

It will not work itself. If a church is afraid of some good hard work, it should not be undertaken.

Plenty of time should be taken to prepare for it. It cannot be put on in a week or ten days. Plow deep for a real crop.

Remember that getting the money is not the primary goal. Getting the money and building up the work of Christ is the task to be accomplished.

After the canvass is over, contributors should have quarterly reminders and, when necessary, a visit from the one who solicited the subscription. The contributor should not be allowed to fall far behind with his offering. Keep up week by week.

Do all in the spirit of Christ, whose ambassadors you are, and in whose name you speak and plead.

Thought Questions

1. What is the danger in becoming very rich?
2. How does a church worthy of support increase giving?
3. What is a budget, and what are some of its advantages?
4. What suggestions would you make regarding the financial management of your class?
5. What are some of the leading features of the financial plan suggested?
6. Do you have a schedule for your contributions or do you simply give in a hit-or-miss fashion?

CHAPTER XII

LEADERSHIP

Leadership important to success.—Especially in the church.—Catholicism's example.—Protestantism can do the same in a different way.—The opportunity for life development offered by the church, missionaries, ministers, laymen.—Preparation for this service.—Organizing for securing and training leaders.—The challenge of a great task.—The awakening of war.—The permanent moral challenge.—The passion for Christ and humanity.—The task of the youth of to-day.—We shall meet it in the spirit of our fathers.

The success or failure of any organization is determined partly by the effective interest of its membership, partly by its leadership. It is impossible to know which is the more important, but it is accurate to say that no organization can succeed without capable leadership. This was illustrated recently in a large printing and bookbinding establishment in the city of New York. The business had been built up through years of skillful management, but the man who had been its creator had died and left its direction to his son. The plant was the same, the office and factory personnel were unchanged, but in a few months the business was steadily declining, to the dismay of all who had built their lives into the plant.

The importance of leadership applies supremely to

the Church of Christ. Just because it has to do with the highest human interests, and because the progress of the race has not gone far enough for men to be as much at home in the realm of the spiritual as they are in the visible, tangible world, the church requires supremely gifted men in its leadership. If every minister could be a divine preacher, a perfect pastor, a wise administrator, a strong personality, he would be none too competent to interpret the things of God to men or to lead his people into the warfare of the kingdom of God. If every official member, every Sunday-school teacher, every inconspicuous worker in a church, were likewise transparently good and intelligent, he would be none too pure a medium through which the heavenly Light might shine. How shall the church secure such leadership?

One powerful church, with the experience of the Christian centuries behind it, provides at heavy expense its own schools for its own children and deliberately selects its future leaders from among them. It then takes these boys and girls apart and directs their associations and education until they are ready to begin their work under the initial guidance of experienced priests and nuns.

In the Protestant churches the same method cannot be used. In fact, we would not use it if we could, for the object may be accomplished more effectively in other ways. The Catholic method produces loyal adherents but not Christian workers. In the Catholic Church the work is done by priests and sisterhoods; in the Protestant Churches by a vast army of lay workers surrounding the ministers and

led by them. The leaders of the Protestant churches are secured by the watchful eye of pastors turning young people into Christian service, by the educational work of the Sunday school, by godly parents encouraging their children to enlist, and, supremely, by young people themselves freely offering their lives for the work of the church.

This little volume is written for the young people of American Methodism. From among those who read it or study it in the Sunday school will come the future pastors, missionaries, officials of organizations, teachers of classes, leaders of clubs, and members of official boards of these two sister churches, North and South, now, happily, drawing closer together again.

Every twenty-five or thirty years these churches entirely change their leadership and require fifty thousand or more of their most capable young men for pastors, bishops, and ministers in special service, and of young men and women for its missions overseas, for deaconesses, directors of religious education, church visitors and secretaries to pastors, for teachers in its schools, nurses in its hospitals, and employees in its Book Concerns.

For those who love humanity and who are drawn naturally and powerfully to devote their lives to some form of Christian work it can be said unhesitatingly that the ministry and the work of the missionary offer supreme opportunities. They are long established and honored the world over. They are learned and ranking professions. They have back of them millions of the best people in the world, whose love and gifts and prayers make the work possible

and give it influence. They combine spiritual service with social service, which is the highest and most powerful form of work for humanity that has ever been known.

The church must have for its pulpits and for the work of its missions the most gifted and attractive of its young people, and they cannot be too highly trained for what they will have to do. No one should offer himself for this service who is not willing and determined to have the best education within his reach. He would be unworthy and selfish who could be willing to go into these great professions half trained when the church has provided abundantly for college and seminary education for all such persons.

In our Protestant churches the place of the laity is as significant as that of the clergy. To one candidate required for the ministry, fifty will be needed as volunteer workers in the church and in the Christian institutions and social agencies of the community. They will be needed for Sunday-school teachers, for leaders of clubs and young people's societies, for church visitors and workers in missionary societies, for members of official boards and Quarterly Conferences, for ushers and musicians, for community workers with the Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Christian Association, and for the committees and boards of numerous civic and charitable organizations.

No such opportunities for service were open to the young people of a generation ago. Almost the entire young people's movement has sprung up within the last fifty years. Young people have now a wide

range of choice from which to select the religious work they desire to do.

Those who offer themselves for some form of voluntary service in addition to their daily work will find themselves associated with true friends and will form helpful and inspiring companionships. They will come home fatigued, perchance from office and factory, to refresh themselves two or three evenings a week by a change of work, turning to the service of God instead of an exclusive devotion of their evenings to recreation.

The opening of these fields to lay service has also brought about a change in the conditions of Christian work. It was not formerly considered necessary for volunteer church workers to receive serious preparation for their duties, but that situation has changed. The church now realizes that to do well any kind of religious or social work requires training. Young people now prepare as definitely to teach classes or to lead clubs or to be ushers or to be leaders of societies as to be ministers or missionaries; except that the training period is briefer.

After passing through the lower grades of the Sunday school those who desire to teach are now expected to enter teacher-training classes in the Young People's or the Adult Departments. Those who look to club work will be asked to work under a competent leader, to do special reading, to attend conferences of club workers. Those who are drawn to the Epworth League will start in on a committee, read the young people's periodicals and attend summer institutes and young people's conventions. If a young person's interest is in missions, he will

join a mission-study class, identify himself with a missionary society, and begin to work up from the bottom. Young people could not spend their vacations to better advantage than at summer schools, where serious study is mingled with outdoor life and pleasant associations. Out of such voluntary training for God's service result efficient leadership and strong church organizations.

One other question as to leadership still remains —one that it is worth while for young people to be thinking about. Leadership in a church does not come of itself. As a rule, teachers, officers, and committeemen do not select themselves but are chosen, and the manner of their choice determines whether the church shall have poor or capable leaders.

The success or failure of a church society is mainly determined in advance when the officers are elected. It is worth spending night after night, for example, in working out the staff and committee lists of a young people's society in preparation for an election. As a rule, no person should be nominated who has not been carefully selected and who has not agreed in advance, if elected, to serve and to give the work his energetic and constant attention.

This principle should be applied at least to all officers and to all chairmen of committees; and it would be better if it were applied to every member of every committee. Such painstaking work in securing the leadership of a church will be repaid many times in the joy and power of what is later accomplished.

We have now accomplished the survey of the Meth-

odist Church and its work. We have seen it in its wonderful beginnings, in its rapid development, in its present extension as a world church. We have studied its organization and methods and considered the opportunities for service which it offers to young people. There remains a final consideration—the challenge that this all makes to the young life of the church.

Great work is never accomplished without the challenge of a great task. It often happens that men who have never shown unusual power in peace time—as, for example, General Grant and General Petain—reveal the most surprising ability in the ordeal of battle. Under like circumstances hundreds of thousands of private soldiers, who are unromantic plodders at home, rise to heights of resourcefulness and heroism.

Down deep in every man's heart is another life capable of undreamed of nobility and strength. The problem is to bring out all that power. As I look at young people these great days I say to myself, "If they knew what is locked up within them and could consecrate themselves, how glorious their lives would become!" I ask myself, "What will awaken them?" And the answer is, "The challenge of a great task."

I heard a professor from one of England's oldest universities say, the year the war began, that England was filled with young men who seemed to cherish no worthy ideals and no strong purposes; who were asking the old, old question, "Is life worth living?" "But," he said, "they have now found not only something worth living for but something worth

dying for. We little knew what heights of self-sacrifice they were capable of reaching."

But war, let us trust, will pass from the earth like a fearsome dream, and with its passing will go the battlefield's splendid call to heroism. Will life then become commonplace and uninteresting? Will young people no longer have a supreme spur to largeness of life? Will they devote their lives to personal ambitions and indulgences? If that were true, one could wish that wars would never end, for there are some things more precious than life itself.

But God has provided something more powerful than war to arouse the consecration of our hearts. It was not war that inspired Christ or Saint Paul or Martin Luther or John Wesley. Nor was it war that sent forth the heroes of the cross during the hundred years of missions which Methodism is celebrating, or that led Methodist itinerants a hundred years ago over the Allegheny Mountains into Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Nothing but the love of God expressing itself in a passion for humanity could have produced such men.

It is the same passion for Christ and humanity which calls to our youth to-day. The young people of Methodism, North and South, stand face to face, because of the war, with unparalleled religious and social changes. Their lives are thrown into a period when an old order is breaking to pieces, and a new order is forming before their eyes. They have their part to play in the most stirring scenes the world has ever witnessed.

It will be theirs to take up the banners of Christ

and his church, which will soon be handed to them by their fathers. It will be theirs to carry forward our missions in many lands to new triumphs and to make the church at home the power that it needs to be in the life of the nation. Upon them will fall the task of readjusting the church to the conditions of modern society, of creating out of it a community force, and of lifting it to a greatness of endeavor which has never before been realized. On them will depend whether in the fight for democracy, which is the fight of the future, the church shall be devoted to the welfare and opportunity and progress of the people, or shall be a reactionary institution, blocking the way of progress and unworthy of the confidence of the masses who are struggling toward freedom and light.

No one who knows Methodist history and tradition, with its glorious annals of sacrifice and achievement, can doubt for a moment that our young men and women now in the church will carry the banner of the Christ to even greater triumphs and victories. The last words of our founder, Wesley, were these: "The best of all is, God is with us." In this same confidence we, his children in the faith, press on until Christ shall be enthroned in the heart of the world.

Thought Questions

1. What is the relation of leadership to the success of an undertaking? Is it everything?
2. Do you consider volunteer workers in churches desirable? Why?
3. Specify ten forms of Christian work to which young people may devote their lives?

4. Specify ten such forms open to women?

5. Do you think all young men planning to become ministers should go to college? Why?

6. What would you like to prepare yourself to do in the church? What training do you think you ought to have for this?

7. Do you think the opportunities of service for Christ are as great now as in Wesley's day? Why?

8. What strikes you as the most important thing ahead of the church in the next ten years?

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